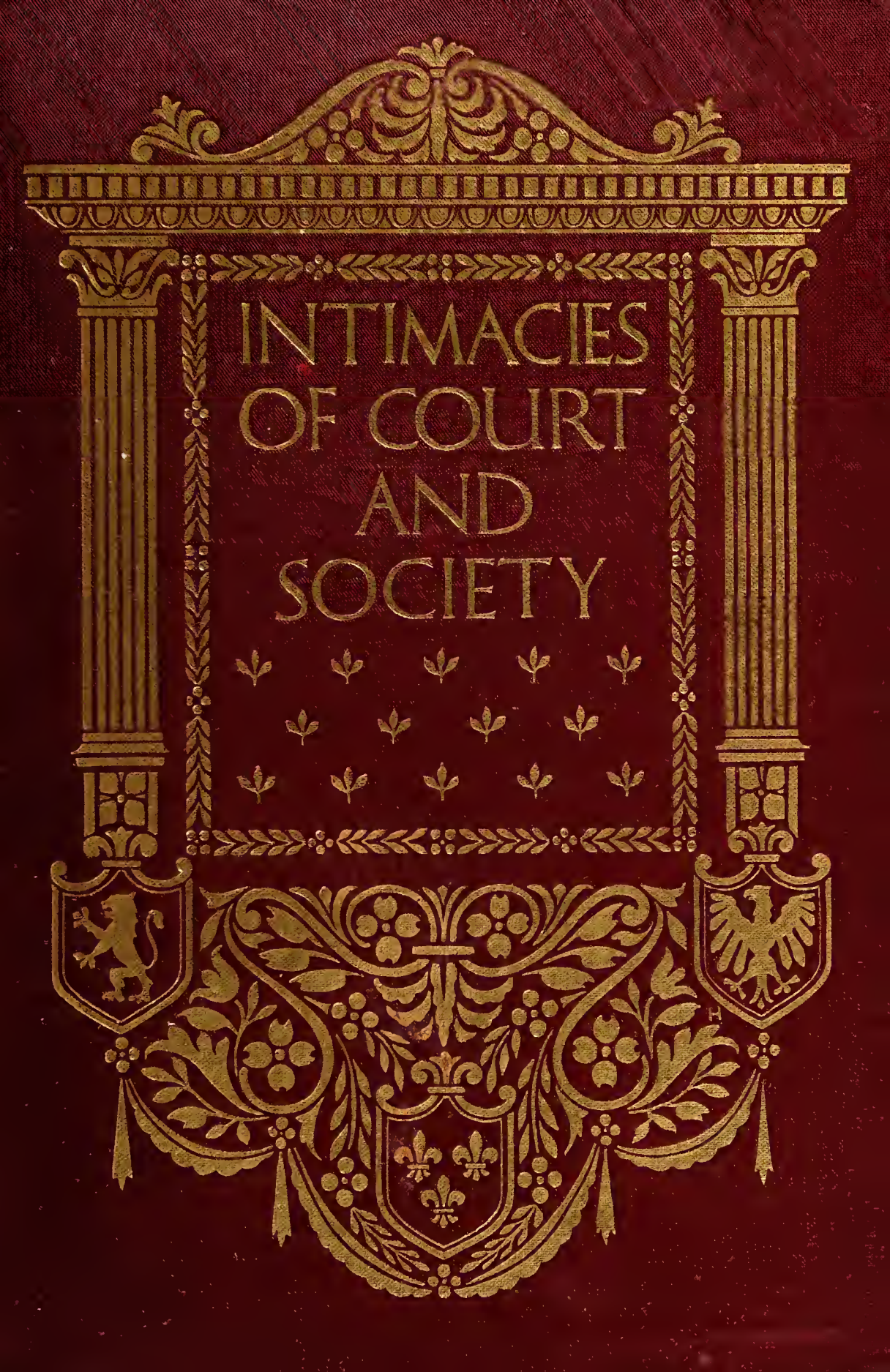
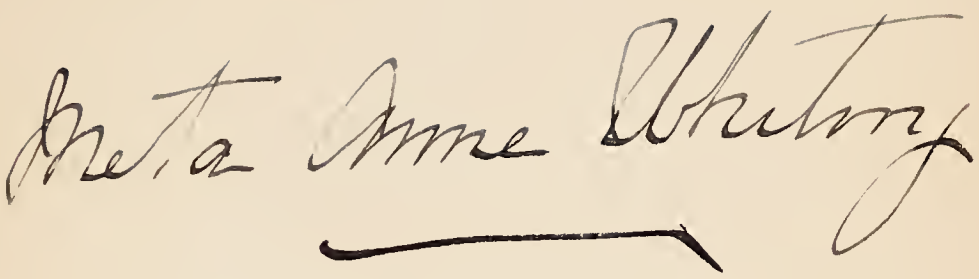

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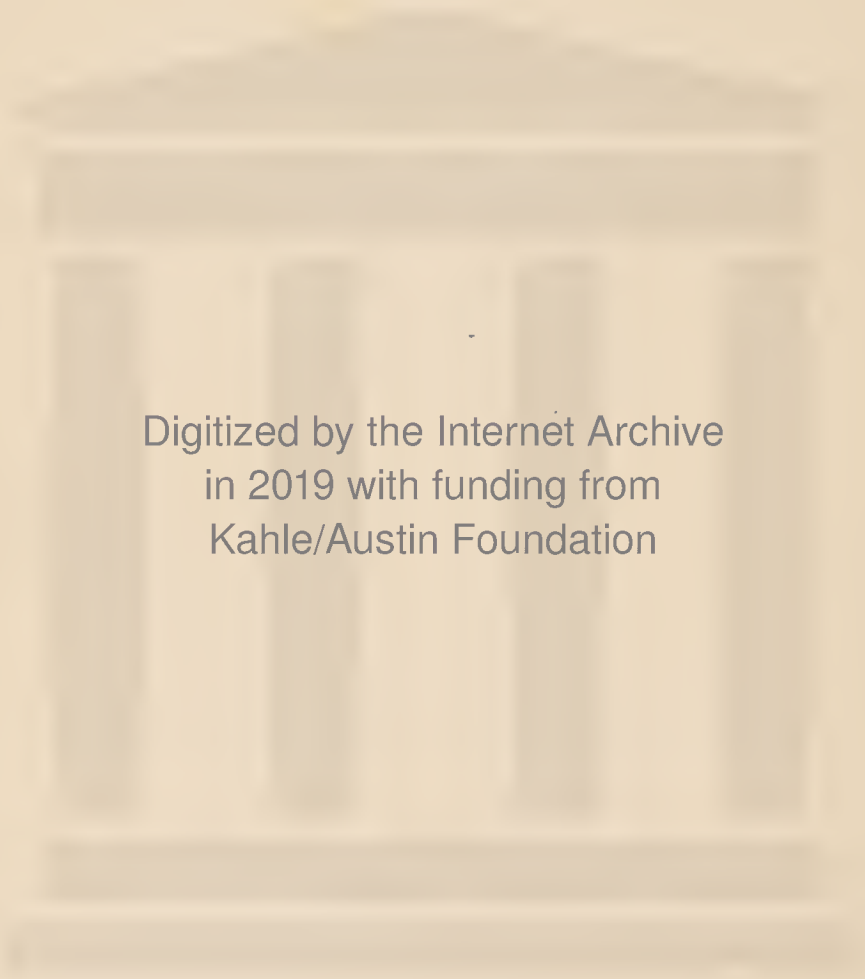
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View of Rome from St. Peter's and Castle St. Angelo. Little beggars "kicking their stout heels in the sun from sheer delight of living"

INTIMACIES OF COURT AND SOCIETY

An Unconventional Narrative of Unofficial Days

BY

THE WIDOW OF AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED



NEW YORK
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TO

MY HUSBAND

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INTRODUCTION

This is an unconventional narrative of a few official and many unofficial days, in five of the capitals of Europe, at Government House, Canada, and at Washington, D. C. It is a record of some twenty years of wanderings, as a woman will sometimes go up and down the world among her friends, with the unsought freedom from the sweet bonds of home-keeping service to those she loves. It is a record of wanderings in pleasant places where men and women are living out their lives as the rulers of the nations, the fortunate ones of Fate endowed with power and wealth, and playing their rôles upon the Stage of Life in the midst of pomp and circumstance—but endowed also with the common heritage of the cottage and the castle: the overwhelming temptations of primal passion, the petty weaknesses of human nature, and the amusing indiosyncrasies of race, of creed and class.

I

THE AMBASSADOR

We were staying in New York when my husband went over to Washington to learn the President's decision in regard to the appointment we had asked for in the European service. We had good reason to think we should get it, as my father-in-law had been one of the celebrated men of his day, carrying his State safely through the terrible days of the war, and had never asked a political favour for any member of his family. My husband made no pretensions to his father's ability, but he bore the famous name with honour and was a favourite with the men of the administration. He had asked only for a secretaryship, as he was young and willing to work his way up. But he as well as myself had been partly educated in Europe, then we had gone over two years before on our wedding trip, so that we knew its galleries and gardens, its streets and monuments, the gay life of its big hotels, and had peeped into the doors which had revealed a vista of the interesting and fascinating experiences of diplomatic life.

But while we felt almost sure, there was still the slip that can come between the cup and the lip, and that morning, after he took the early express to Washington, I was so excited I could not stay indoors. I

ordered my horse and rode like mad through the park; my pretty bay Dolly seemed to understand and tore around for two hours until she stopped panting and dripping with sweat and gave me a look of gentle reproach. Back I went after lunch, this time for a walk, and there my husband found me late in the afternoon. He tried to look non-committal, to tease me a little, and began, "The President said"—then stopped for one tantalising second before he drew my head down and whispered in my ear—"The President said to tell you that every American embassy is American territory, and if you have a son born over there it will not prevent him from being President of the United States himself some day." He took me in his arms right there in the shadows, but before two or three astonished lookers-on who thought, I suppose, that we were just engaged, and I whispered back, "If I dared, I would write to that dear man the President and tell him I should like to kiss him the first time I see him."

I am old enough now to be a grandmother, and the husband and lover of my youth has been dead many years, but it makes me a girl again, now that I have brought myself to turn back the pages to those happy days when we set out for the new life beyond the sea. It is like the day which came at this time when my mother gave me her wedding dress that had been her mother's, but which I had not needed for my own simple morning ceremony. We went upstairs to the room where the big cedar chest stood, brought from Eng-

land by my grandmother fifty years before, and mother softly closed the door behind us and opened the chest with shaking hands. She was a widow just a few months after the night when she became a bride and had never been able to open the cedar chest before. But, in her great mother-love for me, she lifted the lid and took out the gown, the dried rose leaves from her wedding bouquet clinging to the meshes of the lovely lace and giving out the faintest breath of delicate perfume, like the stirring fragrance of the memories that crowd upon me as I write.

"I have been selfish, you should have had it long ago," she said, when I protested that I could do without it. "One should always share the things that are rare and beautiful in one's life, even if the sharing means pain at first. I am far happier in giving you the dress than I have been in keeping it hidden away. The lace is good enough for you to wear anywhere. Your grandmother wore it at the English court."

How thankful I should be for that lace, I did not dream at that moment.

What a wealth of love and kind thoughts the family showered upon us in getting us ready! If I had accepted them, I would have had all the jewels in my husband's family as well as in my own. But the widow of an ambassador who was an intimate friend of my mother's told me that the minister's wife under whom we were to serve was very simple in her dress, and as she did not care to wear much jewelry, I should wear less. Later on I was to learn how rigid is court etiquette on

the subject of dressing, not only in dictating the particular style to be worn at each function, but in making it an almost unpardonable offence for any woman at court to appear better gowned than the queen. No one must attempt to outshine her, although visiting American women, with their jewel boxes overflowing from the collections of dethroned or hapless royalty, sometimes do so, to the chagrin and embarrassment of the ambassador's wife who presents them.

It was through my mother's friend that I secured my French maid, Marie, who knew almost as much about court etiquette as a master of ceremonies, and who was invaluable for my months of apprenticeship. She came to me when we reached Paris, where I did practically all of my shopping, and at first could hardly say a word to either of us without calling us "excellency." It was like a child's new toy for a few days. But when she began quietly instructing every servant in the hotel to call us "excellency" as we passed, my husband stopped it. For, of course, we were not "excellency;" no secretary is properly so called. And Marie slyly let me understand that she knew it as well as I did. But her end was attained, for it brought us a realisation of the new dignity. My husband had a habit of wearing his hat at a little angle, which, with his merry eyes, made him look decidedly rakish, but now he took pains to put it on perfectly straight, and to carry himself correctly. And he never embraced me again in a public park, as he did that day in New York.

We began talking together in French, which we had both studied thoroughly during our school days in Paris, and our knowledge of this beautiful language of diplomacy brought many charming experiences of intimacy among the people we met which we would not have had otherwise. To-day, however, it is the fashion to speak English in European society, and even at court, although French still remains the official language.

Our first impressions of actual connection with the service were of the tremendous power and unique position of the United States among the great nations of the world. The wonderful country of the West, isolated on either side by the sweep of a mighty ocean guarding it better than an army of a million men, proudly standing aloof from the intrigues of the Europeans, a young giant such as history cannot reproduce—the American who sees it through the eyes of European diplomacy realises best what it is and what its possibilities are, possibilities as unlimited as the depths of the oceans which dash against its shores.

The prestige of the American in the diplomatic corps is undisputed. He stands for a government which would probably hold the balance of power in an international difficulty, the only one whose independent policy is not influenced by desire for conquest, whose financial resources could perhaps make or ruin a nation's credit in a day.

But in the mundane world of housekeeping, we often found it inconvenient to belong to this land of golden

promise. Wherever we went, the house agents wanted us to pay almost double, and we often had to do it because we could not sign a long lease. People who own big houses are generally rich enough to live in them. If financial reverses come, they try to sell such white elephants; to rent them furnished is the last resort. We could quite understand when they demanded a long lease before going to the trouble of getting the place in condition for a tenant, but few men in the service in our day were reckless enough or rich enough to sign a long lease. The changes and recalls were too swift and sudden; there was many an office boy in New York who felt more secure in his "job." The State Department, then as to-day, gave no assurances, it being definitely understood that the President reserved the right to recall or change a man at any time.

Generally taking a furnished house, I never attempted to hire the servants, although Marie, who fought so many of my battles, often suggested it. But they were usually included in the inventory, with a housekeeper who was responsible to the owner. The French cook always did her own marketing wherever we were living. We knew she had a commission on every penny's worth she bought, and that, of course, it was added in some subtle way to the bill. But it was a perquisite which every good cook demanded and obtained, and I soon learned how useless it was for me to attempt to change any established custom of Europe, whether of the kitchen or the drawing-room. The machinery, once started, went like clockwork, and I had a peace and

repose in my homes in Europe which I never had in America.

But in all our troubles in getting settled, we had no such an experience as befell one of our colleagues. He rented an old palace which had, as often in such houses, a number of inconvenient and useless rooms which had not been restored for modern occupancy, and which the family therefore never visited. The large retinue of servants was retained, and it took the wife some time to become accustomed to all the new faces in the house, gardens, and stables. But after she had been there a month, she was constantly meeting a man and woman at the lodge gate who walked in as if they belonged to the place, but who she knew were not on the servants' roll. Upon investigation, she discovered that they had been formerly employed by the owner, and were then occupying rooms in the basement, living in unutterable filth with their five children and an old grandmother, the servants upstairs sending them food from the kitchen. The ambassador ordered them out, but they refused to go, declaring that they had permission from the owner to stay. This really proved to be the case, he taking the whole matter in a jocular mood, and saying that it was a small thing for the rich American to let them live in his basement, as he represented a country where rich and poor were supposed to be equal. It was only when typhoid fever appeared among the children that the ambassador was able to get rid of them.

Congressman Nicholas Longworth, when he went to

Europe on his wedding tour after marrying President Roosevelt's daughter, was so royally entertained by the American representatives that he returned to Washington, fired with zeal to provide our ambassadors and ministers with suitable residences from the national treasury. The bill was discussed in the House, but there was, to the initiated, a startling lack of warmth on the part of the men to be benefited. One heard strange rumours that some of them would resign if they could not rent their own homes and pay the rent out of their own pockets.

I am quite certain that this was much exaggerated, as any American diplomatist would welcome a change which would add greater dignity to his post and to the position of his country. But any one who knows the life intimately, knows what a protection it is to the man not to be dependent upon his government for his home. If it belonged to the United States, there are a dozen or two of his country people among the thousands who go abroad every year who would expect to send their trunks on and use it as an hotel where no bills had to be paid. They are like the type of politician which my husband used to joke about, the men seen at every political convention, coming up with a clean shirt and a five-dollar bill—and managing to get home without changing either one of them!

The duties of a secretary are not of special importance, unless he becomes *chargé d'affaires* in the absence of his chief. And it is a good many years since the ambassador or minister played the principal rôle in

the affairs of his own government and the one to which he is accredited. A man once sent off to his post, the State Department leaves him much to himself until he is recalled, the recall being frequently made by cable, and sometimes falling upon his head like a bolt from the blue. He is not the one who to-day makes the treaty; that is done direct from Washington, although he is, of course, kept informed of the negotiations. His despatches to Washington are almost always behind those of the Associated Press, as the despatches to the embassy or legation from Washington are behind them. I happened to be in Europe in a diplomatist's family when President McKinley died, and our ambassador at the post, one of the largest capitals of the world, received his first news through a correspondent of the Associated Press, who came to the house ten minutes before the *doyen* of the diplomatic corps called to offer his condolences, as etiquette required. The State Department's despatch came several hours later, and the ambassador narrowly escaped the grave embarrassment of being informed of this important event by the representative of another country.

The secretary has no credentials to present to the sovereign, he and his wife are merely introduced when it is convenient, and they do not go to the state dinners. So it was a proud and happy day for me, several years after our first appointment, when the gorgeous court carriage, with the coachman in red livery and powdered wig, and three lackeys standing on the footman's box at the back, drew up before the house, a master of cere-

monies in full uniform coming to conduct my husband to the King. An outrider went on before, and another court carriage, almost as gorgeous, followed with the secretaries of the embassy, the magnificent horses seeming scarcely to touch the ground with their dainty feet.

He had gone so many times as secretary in the train of his own chief that I could follow the ceremony almost as if I had been there, could see the guard of soldiers drawn up to salute as he passed into the courtyard, could see him received in the ambassador's room with the prefect of the palace and two masters of ceremonies, where the sun would be shining through upon the yellow brocaded furniture and the famous Gobelin tapestries, and where he would be met by the officers of the royal household, all in their most resplendent uniforms, with swords clanking as they came forward to meet him, in his simple black clothes, but every whit as distinguished-looking as any of them. In a moment the doors of the throne-room would be flung open, the King would be there standing on the throne with its draperies of crimson velvet held back by gold clasps mounted with the crown; he would be smiling cordially, I knew, as he had been acquainted with my husband as secretary, and had frankly expressed his pleasure at the appointment. The others in the ambassador's room would get a look, then the doors would close, and the new ambassador would be alone with the King.

I timed it so accurately, that I was at the window just as the carriage returned. I ran impetuously to

the door—and there was Marie, nearly bursting with delight, and every blessed servant in the house, from the butler to the little scullery maid, gravely bowing so that their heads nearly touched the floor, and saying "excellency." My husband's eyes began to dance, and I saw that he wanted to play some boyish prank and shock them all; but he knew how they adored him, so he walked past the long line with his head up, as he knew they wanted him to do, and not until he was safely in my sitting-room, with the key turned in the lock, did he give way to shaking laughter.

When he had recovered, I asked, "And what did the King say?" "His Majesty said several things," he replied, "but the principal one was that he had the finest baby boy ever born. He is the proudest father in the whole world." We could well believe it, for the baby prince had arrived after many anxious years of waiting, anxious years for the nation as well as for the King, because the then heir-apparent had married a haughty princess from a family once occupying half the thrones of Europe, but bringing only misery and revolution with their reigns.

How well I remember the infinite tenderness of my dear husband's voice and eyes as we sat there with clasped hands, thinking no longer of the happiness of the good King and Queen, but of our own great loss. For the son who had come to us after ten years of marriage had stayed only a few short days. I lived over again, as we sat there, the radiant months of eager waiting and sweet preparation, the secret consecration of

my mother soul, and the unforgettable moment when all memory of pain vanished as they laid the precious, soft little bundle on my breast. In the hour of our highest honour and triumph, the wound struck deepest; it would have seemed so much more worth while if our son had lived!

The invitations to our first state dinner followed in a few days after this. I had ordered a new gown from Paris, but the morning of the dinner came, and it had not arrived. We telegraphed to the dressmaker, and she replied that it was on its way, and, as she had never disappointed me before, I did not begin to worry until the late afternoon. Marie chattered in voluble French all over the house, and sent off a telegram on her own account, giving the dressmaker, whom she knew intimately, a piece of her mind in such emphatic and graphic language that, while, of course, I could not be responsible for it, it considerably relieved my own feelings.

The last train upon which the package could reach us in time came in a few minutes after six; we sent a servant to the station, but he returned empty-handed, and Marie and I sat staring at one another in dumb despair. My first state dinner, and nothing to wear—could any situation be more tragic? Excuses were impossible, every one knew I was in perfect health, and that very afternoon the Queen had recognised me as our carriages passed near the palace, so it was very evident I could not plead a sudden illness.

"Marie, I simply must go and I simply must have a

proper gown; what are you good for if you can't help me out at à time like this?" I said desperately and with a good deal of childish pettishness, I am afraid. "If Madame will excuse me, I go away for five minutes to think," she replied humbly, as if she were to blame!

She came back beaming, a big box in her hands, exclaiming, "Madame, we are saved!" She had thought of my mother's wedding dress, which we had often looked over and talked about, but which I had never worn. The lace seemed too delicate and fragile for the crush of a court ball, where a reckless foot would soon have ruined it, and it had, besides, such an intimate association with my mother's sad life that I had always put it back reverently in its box, preferring to leave it unworn.

But now it was the only thing at all possible, and Marie had it out in a twinkling, measuring the train to see if it were of the proper length, and holding it up for me to put on. The white satin underdress had to be adjusted first, but, with her deft needle and a box of pins, it soon was ready and she draped the lace on with the sure touch and art inherent in the Frenchwoman. My husband told me I had never looked better, which pleased Marie almost as much as it did myself.

The excitement had made me so tired that, after we reached the palace and stood waiting for the King and Queen to enter, I said thoughtlessly to the Chinese ambassador, who was standing near, "I would drop dead if I had to stand this way with my feet bound like those of the women of your country." I remember that he surveyed me with the calm, impenetrable gaze of the

Oriental, glancing then at a group of women in front of us, whose tiny waists were quite out of proportion to their shoulders, as he said quietly, "Do you think our custom of binding the feet more barbarous than yours of torturing the body with steel corsets like that?"

At dinner I recall that I sat opposite to Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, who has recently proclaimed himself Czar and showed a statesmanship strong and shrewd enough to place him in the centre of the stage of European politics. At that time, he impressed neither my husband nor myself as possessing unusual character or power. His face was prominently marked with the long Bourbon nose and upper lip; he was very much of a dandy, and inordinately vain of his hands, which were as white and beautifully moulded as a woman's, with slender, tapering fingers covered with curious rings.

We had entered the service with a definite idea of what we sought, which was the opportunity of coming into intimate contact with the men and women who were the makers of the European history of their day, and, with my husband at the head of his embassy, we found all doors open in official life and in society. We took at once a place of active leadership, not on account of ourselves, but of the country we represented, and we had too sensitive an appreciation of this fact ever to neglect the duties which brought so many delightful things, but which were also sometimes fatiguing and exacting.

I remember how keen was our delight in being finally in a position where we could seek out the distinguished men of science and the professions who did not belong to the life of the court, forming a little circle of our own among them. We were much astonished when one of our American colleagues, a man for whom we had sincere respect, told us that he did not consider himself privileged to go beyond court life for his associates. "I am accredited to the sovereign and the court," he said, "and should confine my intimacies within its limits." At that time, the court where he was stationed, in the far North of Europe, was in deep mourning; there were scarcely any dinners even, in the diplomatic corps, and the season was so unutterably dull and stupid that his wife had gone off to America to visit her children at school. The ambassador himself spent lonely days and nights in his big house, cut off by etiquette from entertaining the people of the court, and denying himself the companionship of those whom he could have welcomed informally, the celebrated physicians and men at the bar, the authors and artists.

The ambassadors and ministers of the European countries are almost invariably from the historical families of their nation, whose birth gives them at home a social rank above the men of the professions who do not happen to be as well born, although often of infinitely greater individual ability and achievement. It is from this class of the professions that the American diplomatic corps is largely recruited, and we could never regard the deference they received from their colleagues who rep-

resented the old monarchies without a thrill of patriotic exultation at the triumph of democratic principles. For this very reason we considered it quite within our province, if not an actual duty, to take pains to recognise the men of Europe who stood for achievement rather than birth, who were the exponents of the ideas and ideals of America, the country where every man has his chance.

Our years in Europe only strengthened our patriotism, and we could never understand how any of our American colleagues could enter so intimately into the ideas of Old-World society as to lose their spirit of social democracy. We once met the wife of one of our colleagues who told us that the thing she enjoyed the most in Europe was the fact that people there were willing to stay where they were born. "It is such a relief to live where people stay where they are put," was the way she expressed it. My husband, who sometimes gave himself the pleasure of saying what he thought, a privilege not often accorded a diplomatist, retorted, "If everybody in America had stayed where they were put, Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin, and a few others, for example, there wouldn't be much of a United States for your husband to be ambassador from."

American ambassadors in Europe have come and have gone, some of them so rich that the sovereign himself has felt comparatively poor beside them; but the fame and standards of James Russell Lowell, John Hay, and Andrew D. White have endured above all others, and will

do so, for many years to come, as representing the simplicity and genuine worth which Europe, in its thoughtful circles, seeks with longing eyes in America. And in this list I would include Alphonso Taft, the President's father, who was our envoy in Russia for the coronation of Alexander III, and who left an impression upon the country which no succeeding American has been able to efface. I learned this when I was there many years before the son had risen to a place where he could shed any lustre upon his father's name.

The wife of a full-fledged ambassador has always a list of women who want to be presented at court, and with the American ambassador's wife the list is a long one. It is not the American temperament to risk losing a thing by not asking for it, and with court presentations the wish is often so ardent that it becomes a prayer, and then a threat if there is political influence within reach.

The first man under whom we served had a rule that no married woman was to be presented who was in Europe without her husband. He and his wife were a charming old couple, as much in love after their golden wedding day as when they became engaged, and they said firmly, " A woman has no business being in Europe without her husband, unless she is over here for her health. And if she is ill, she has no business going to court." If we had had the courage of our convictions, we would have made the same rule, and, however mediæval it seemed even then, a quarter of a century ago, to Americans, it could be easily enforced to-day, with-

out protest, at almost any German or French embassy.

The American ambassador's wife is usually very patriotic, although I am quite well aware that many people question it. She is proud of the reputation her countrywomen have established abroad for cleverness and beauty, and willing to go out of her way to give as many of them as possible the éclat and excitement of going to court. But, according to etiquette, she can make but two or three presentations at each court, and these must be approved by the court chamberlain, while there are sometimes a hundred applicants. She cannot present a woman who has been divorced or been in any way connected with a social scandal. She cannot present the daughter of the most influential politician if she is socially impossible. A politician who can stalk through the departments at Washington in a free and easy way, and make every man, from the President down, feel his importance, can get nothing sometimes for his family from the ambassadors.

A great deal of trouble comes through the letters of introduction which the State Department gives to such men for their wives and daughters. The men demand them, and the Department is not in a position to refuse, although it is well understood between the Department and the embassy that the letter means nothing, that it has, as it were, been obtained by coercion. But the woman who brings it over has expectations of a court presentation, and a round of gaiety with the aristocracy, and often goes home in a towering rage of disappointment.

Until a few years ago, some of the governors of the different States kept printed forms which were filled out upon application to any respectable persons who applied, recommending them to the courtesy of our foreign representatives. But these letters were so numerous that they became a veritable nuisance, and the State Department ordered them discontinued. When it came to a little humbug perquisite like that, the State Department felt it needed it all!

It was during this period that a lady arrived one winter day in the capital where we were stationed, armed with such a letter. She went from the train to the embassy, and a polite secretary told her that the ambassador was out, but would receive her any day between eleven and three, his office hours. She called the next day at four, and was incensed that he had not waited until she came. Early the following morning, before any of the family were about at the house, Marie knocked at my husband's bedroom door to say that a lady wanted to see him on urgent business. With his usual kindness of heart, he hurriedly put on dressing-gown and slippers, and went into the drawing-room, where he found an excited woman pacing the floor.

"Madame, what can I do for you?" he asked in his most sympathetic tone, really distressed at her agitation, and thinking she must have met with some extraordinary experience. She replied by enquiring haughtily if he had received the letter of introduction she had presented from the governor of her State, and the poor fellow told her he had received it and regretted that she

had not called in office hours. "What can I do for you?" he asked again. "Sir, I want attention," she announced, drawing herself up, her eyes blazing with indignation. My husband had by this time recognised the sort of person he had to deal with, and assuming all the dignity possible in his négligée attire, he went to the door and bowed her out, with, "Madame, if it is business attention you want, I shall be glad to give it to you at my office in office hours. If it is social attention you want, I don't know you and I owe you nothing."

It was Marie, however, who gave the finishing touch to the little comedy, as she showed the lady out of the house. "Would you like to have His Excellency send word over to the palace that you would enjoy taking breakfast with the Queen?" she asked with a low bow and a deference that was the height of impertinence. It was as good as a play; but we had to make her promise not to say such a thing again; she had become such a privileged character that she might seriously embarrass us some day.

Dear, faithful Marie! She died in our service, and her last word was "excellency" to my husband, as he stooped over and brushed back the gray hair from the forehead already chilled by death. Neither of us could hear the word for many a day after without a throb of pain.

We were really much indebted to this lady who wanted "attention" so early that cold winter morning, because it was so amusing. My husband, who was an

old friend of John Hay's, was telling him the story one day in London, Mr. Hay being then accredited to the Court of St. James. He matched it with one of his own about a man who wanted "attention." Shortly before coming to London, Mr. Hay had been out in Ohio on campaign business, and had exchanged a few words with a local politician. After several years of busy London life, he had forgotten the man's very existence, when he received a letter from him, written with the familiarity of a lifelong friendship, to say that he was bringing a party of forty tourists to Europe, and would be much obliged if the ambassador would show them around the House of Commons and give them tea on the terrace. He wanted, I believe, to announce this pleasure on his prospectus.

Every embassy is sought many times during the year by some one in dire distress for money. There are numerous foreigners who want their passage paid to an American port, having visions of streets stacked with dollars which they can have for the taking. And there are the many sad cases of young men and women who come abroad to study, thinking they can live on nothing, and get lessons from the great masters for nothing. Or, they imagine that, once in Europe, some way will be opened for them to earn a living and study at the same time. The artistic temperament is unduly optimistic as well as supersensitive, and sometimes they come to the very verge of starvation before making known their wants. There are clubs and societies especially organized to protect and assist the students,

but in extremity it is the ambassador to whom they appeal. And these men spend hundreds of dollars every year in such charity, saying nothing about it, doing it as a matter of course, and in addition to their large contributions to every public form of such charity.

They are often imposed upon, it goes without saying, and often treated with ingratitude. It is not that they expect to be reimbursed; that occurs too seldom to be looked upon as a usual thing. But there have been many cases where they have sent home persons, destitute and friendless in a foreign country, who considered the gift too lightly even to be acknowledged when they were safe again among their own people.

Every diplomatic officer hears so many stories of distress and has so many experiences with fraud, that he becomes sceptical, in spite of himself, and learns that one of his important duties is the power to say no. But when any kind of a personal tie exists, he finds it practically impossible to resist the appeal, and puts his hand in his pocket as cheerfully as he can.

We had a friend who was occupying one of the posts in the service at Paris during the time of an international gathering, when a lady whose husband was a prominent judge in the State which the diplomatist called his home, came to Paris and took an expensive apartment in the Champs-Élysées. She had an unimportant connection with the international gathering, but considered it nevertheless necessary to live like a princess, and to order a thousand dollars' worth of gowns which she could not pay for. In a few weeks

she went to our friend, whom she had never known personally in America, and asked him to loan her money for current expenses. He told her that she was living a good deal better than he was, and that he could not afford to keep up her establishment. She stayed in his office for two hours, interrupting important business, and went away very indignant.

The next week she came back. This time she asked him to pay her debts and give her enough money to get home on. She was tearful and repentant, and fearful of what her husband would say and do about her extravagance. But still the diplomatist could not be persuaded to help her.

She returned the third time, a cablegram in her hand which read, "Your husband is dying; come at once." "Now, will you send me home?" she asked him, and he said the only thing possible under the circumstances, "If your husband is dying, I certainly will." So the lady packed her new gowns and sailed gaily home, cabling to her husband the judge, and he met her at the pier when the boat reached New York, while the man in Paris and his wife had the pleasure of reading, in the American papers that came shortly afterwards, descriptions of the gowns that were being worn by the lady at the parties given in honour of her return from Europe.

Personally, we were never ourselves greatly imposed upon, and those of our friends in the service who were, seldom complained, talking about it in their intimate circle perhaps, but only to point a good joke against

themselves. I remember that our friend in Paris, for instance, in telling about the lady and her cablegram, said, "It was such a clever dodge that I wouldn't have minded so much if the judge hadn't been a Democrat. I wrote him a letter about it, but he never replied. Probably he thought it was a good way to get even on campaign scores."

Thus the years passed, and there were so many of them, and my visits home necessarily so short, that it came about that I knew the streets of the capitals of Europe as well as those in the town where I was born, and much better than those of New York or Chicago, or the other large cities of the United States.

And there have been the happy days of the afterwards; when, in my loneliness and restlessness, I have come back again and again, free from the restrictions of etiquette and the crowding duties of official hospitality, and, with so many doors open in welcome, have been able to pick and choose where I would pass my time and with whom, as no diplomatist's wife can always do.

It is of these later visits, so full of delightful intimacies, that I shall write in the chapters that follow.

And there are the days that come now and again, about which I cannot write, when, with no one to say me nay, I hide myself away with my memories and my dreams,—down by the sea, in some busy port where so many strange boats come in from far-off lands, that it seems as if there must be one coming to me, from that distant bourn where our loved ones go; or up on a

mountain top, where the solitude brings me peace, and I learn to be ashamed. For the memories are of things so rare and precious, of a king so good and strong who made me his queen of love; and the dreams are so beautiful, of the day that is to come, when I shall see him, and when a baby boy, with his eyes and hair, shall fill my empty arms.

II

PARIS

THE SOCIETY OF THE REPUBLIC

THERE's a merry sprite of gaiety, good humour, and audacity hidden in the exhilarating air of Paris, touching with his magic wand all who enter within its gates. If you come from sober London, or stolid Berlin, and want to enjoy its society at its best, you come for a few weeks of quiet assimilation.

In Paris, there is always the *tout-ensemble* of which you hear so much in French art and Parisian dressing. At the London opera it is Melba, Caruso, or Tetrazzini whom you go to hear; in Paris it is the opera itself, regardless of the star. And in Parisian life you are a part of the great orchestra and you must become attuned to the melody of the whole. You are an actor in the drama, and you must learn the cue and the lines.

In London individuality counts for success, and in Paris a woman must meet its own requirements, superficial but none the less searching. She must dress and know how to dress; to be *chic* is nothing; every shopgirl is that. She must be an artist, unoffending to the masculine and feminine eyes that look upon the masterpieces of the Louvre and the Luxembourg as often and

with as much willing pleasure as upon those of the dressmakers of the Rue de la Paix. She must cultivate that sensitiveness to sight and sound, to colour and harmony, to the outward semblance, which makes the Parisian's heaven and hell. She must be gay, serious not before anything of life and its problems, but only before something marvellous in nature, art, or literature.

To be shocked in London is fashionable. In Paris it is the most hateful of unfashionable things—middle-class. The Parisian never ceases to make merry over the comparison. The "Divine Sarah," like all actresses, is not received in Paris, but London, with its paradoxes, opens wide its doors to her as to all celebrated artists. A story which has lasted twenty years of telling relates to the time when she was asked to dine at an English house, and sent word ahead that she was bringing a friend. At the door the footman was ordered to announce, "Mademoiselle Bernhardt and her son." The man dropped dead, according to the tale, and the host fell into a fit of apoplexy.

The chief contribution of a young matron to a Parisian dinner party may be a story heard in London only in the smoking-room. Life as it is, with its follies and vices, is discussed as a matter of course. It is a safety valve for temperament which the silent English do not have, and does not indicate that the French have any more of folly and vice, but only that it is on the surface, where all the world may see.

Conversation in itself as a supreme accomplishment

is still the wonder of the Parisian world, even in the day of bridge. One must learn to talk easily and brilliantly; even the children of France do that.

A Frenchman kisses a woman's hand when he greets her in the house. He is a perfect cavalier and knows her wishes before she has had the time to express them. He has half a dozen plans for her pleasure in as many minutes, a little dinner, or an excursion, a book to be read, an introduction to some one of interest. If you come direct from London, you reach instinctively for your engagement book, and feel a little foolish when you meet him the next week and find that he has forgotten all about them. He is like a charming child in his momentary desire to please you. You must not expect him to remember.

It is the cup of the hour which is drained to the dregs. There is no to-morrow.

You come, then, for a few weeks of assimilation. You order your gowns, and you do some of the delightful things that fill the time of the vast throng of ever-busy visitors who may not know a soul in Paris.

These are the days when you go to the Forests of Fontainebleau, or join the Sunday thousands at Versailles when the fountains play. Or, you take a penny boat up the Seine to St. Cloud, and, with some one you love, wander hand-in-hand like two school children through its terraces and glades, missing nothing of the once famous château in the wide-spreading woods flaming in autumnal glory. On and on you wander for

hours, drinking in the air like so much champagne, and watching the trees wrap themselves deep in purple shadows as the early twilight falls upon them. Then, from the high embankment, you can look out upon the pretty town of Sèvres on one side, and see on the other the myriad lights of Paris gleaming in the distance. The river is full of little boats, alive with line after line of flashing light, and you find a seat among a crowd of artists in broad-brimmed hats and flowing neckties, who clasp their sketchbooks tightly under their arms, and throw a look backward as the boat drops down into the midst of the light on its way back to Paris.

You ride home on top of a slow-going omnibus, which gives you the gorgeous windows of the florists and the softly illuminated antique shops, like room after room in a palace, as the lovely things in gold and silver, ivory and bronze, form their pictures, with old tapestries, rare prints and laces on the walls, and brocaded stuffs in bright colours hanging carelessly across quaintly carved chairs and oaken chests. The little old men and women who tend them are a part of the picture, too, and the treasures are a part of them. The next day, if you go to buy a jewelled button or a piece of lace, they will caress it tenderly as they give it up. But they will hand it to you in a piece of common newspaper, not being at all equal to spending a few pennies for a proper wrapping.

It is like the love of the men of France for the

women whom they marry, full of words and ardent emotion, but prudently regulated by the size of the *dot.*

Those are the days when you have plenty of time for the Bois—if that could ever be. The Bois de Boulogne—that noble avenue stretching from the great structure of the Arc de Triomphe, and diverging into woodland paths as far as the clear vision of the bright French skies can reach, lined on either side by stone mansions, the costliest in Paris. French purses are not equal to them, only those of the enormously rich Americans and the queens of the recognized French world of the *cocottes.*

On the driveway racing motor cars and fashionable, high-stepping cobs mingle with the tired, lean animals and shabby cabs which the casual tourists have hailed. On the cinder path at one side, a cavalcade of handsome horsemen, army officers in scarlet breeches and navy-blue coats, or in dashing costume of sky-blue cloth and gold braid, fitting their corseted, tapering waists to perfection; on the promenade at the other side, the loveliest, daintiest children in the world, proud little gentlemen and ladies, with nurses in every peasant dress of Europe.

Tall, broad-shouldered English and American men, vigorous and alert, stride along, soon outdistancing the small, elegant Frenchman, with a connoisseur's eye for every passing female form, walking slowly, young in years, but worn out with pleasure.

The Bois—where one finds the people who float in

from the Gare du Nord, black and white, brown and yellow, from Chicago and Cairo, Tokio and Constantinople, from whence, who enquires? They are gone in a few weeks or months, whither, who knows? Scarcely the tradesmen who supply their demands and gamble on the payment. In a week they are installed near the Étoile, with a retinue of servants, horses, and motor cars. They give the big dinners at the fashionable restaurants which one reads about in the papers, gathering about them a motley array of bejewelled women and blasé men, whose titles are unrecorded in any book of nobility. But they dazzle the eyes and enliven the scene as they dash by in the Bois, the sun catching the gold on their harness and revealing in the carriage visions of lace and fur and ropes of pearls.

The Bois—where one passes the Parisian *monde où l'on s'amuse*, a king, perhaps, a Russian grand duke, or the ruler of a German principality, come to Paris incognito, seeking the gay throng in the Land of Forgetting. One would meet them at such times nowhere in the most distinguished society, only at the theatre, the picture gallery, or in the Bois, a celebrated beauty on the arm, whose home is probably one of the mansions nearby. It is kept up with a splendor worthy of a Pompadour or a Du Barry. The best artists of France have been proud to decorate it. And in its *salons* could be found on occasion the most powerful men of the time, taking their man's privilege of paying court to the queen of the *cocottes*.

She is the quintessence of Parisian audacity and

fashion. Any man of the Parisian world will tell you about her. She may be a Spanish dancer, the daughter of peasants. She is just as likely to be the daughter of a general, a prince, or a bishop, with a good education and a childhood of luxury, with refinement and charm—with everything but a *dot*. And without a *dot* she could not marry. She might, perhaps, have been a governess or a stenographer, where her beauty and distinction would have made her the easy prey of men who would have flung her a few *sous* when they grew tired of her and left her to walk the streets. Honest she would certainly have little chance to be in Paris. So she prefers to live in the Bois, and have motor cars and a château.

The *grandes dames* of the capital are not too proud eagerly to scrutinise her as she goes by, and to copy her mode and her manner—as long as she is the vogue; and not too proud to minister to the wretchedness of her old age, probably spent in the lowest depths of Montmartre, hatless and shoeless, her face grown hideous from vice.

The Bois! Where one passes men who are husbands and fathers, and women who are wives and mothers, belonging now only to those who are forgetting, and hearing only the voice of the siren, vibrant with a thousand charms of forbidden desire.

The Bois! Where one passes kings and queens in exile, wearing brave faces and manners of the court, with empty pockets and mountains of debts; where one passes the well-known exiles from other lands, who have

lost home and children and everything sweet and precious by a few short nights of discovered folly—who are the pariahs of England, that land sacred to the eleventh commandment, " Thou shalt not be found out." And one is glad for once that there is this Babylon of a Paris to receive and understand them, and to give some sort of a pitying welcome to the hearts that must so often be aching, to the feet that must so soon have grown weary.

Almost every winter, shortly after the New Year, you can see driving in the Bois a tragic-eyed old woman dressed in deep widow's weeds, whose face, furrowed with care, and figure bent with sorrow as well as age, bear to-day little trace of the radiant beauty that startled and enraptured the world when she became Eugénie, Empress of the French. She is in Paris only for a short time on her way to her villa at Cap Martin, but those few days she passes in the Bois, or at her hotel window in the Rue de Rivoli, her head in her hands, her eyes gazing, gazing, upon the Tuileries Gardens opposite, the garden spot of love and beauty and power in her life.

In the Bois meet and mingle, and there only with perfect freedom, the different elements that go to make up the society of Paris, unorganised, most of them contemptuous one of the other, and often as ignorant of the other as if strangers from different lands. There is the old nobility centred and entrenched in the seigniorial *hôtels* of the Faubourg St. Germain, living behind high stone walls in a world apart from the

bustling, commercial, republican Paris, and in haughty, bitter protest against the present *régime;* the descendants of the ancient nobility who ruled in France before the Crusades, and gathered around Louis XIV in the court, the most splendid and cultivated, profligate and frivolous which Europe has ever known.

There is the new nobility of the Empire, spreading its dwellings along the Faubourg St. Honoré, the families of Wagram and a hundred others, ennobled, made rich and powerful by the Bonapartes, and deserting them for the Republic when their fortunes were at stake. There are the Rothschilds and other great bankers of the class called *Haute Finance*, tolerated in the society of that Paris for which they have done so much, but which even to-day only condescends to the Jew. Then there are the people of the *Haute Bourgeoisie* or upper middle class, who in France, as in every other land, are the workaday people of the professions, of business and government, literature and art.

To the true American, this class in France is the most interesting and sympathetic of any to be found in Europe. Elsewhere, they are patronised by the hereditary leaders of society, who come into their own position through the merits of their ancestors. In France the leaders are the triumphant victors of work and brains, the descendants of the peasants and the mob that devastated their country and made its gutters run with blood in their frenzy for "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." They are in possession to-day of France, and Paris is the product of their passionate adoration

—Paris, with its wide, clean streets, its wonderful monuments, the prosperity that renews its art, enriches its literature, and splendidly subsidises its opera and theatre. If they are a little vulgar in their exultation and not overly scrupulous at times, one can forgive them.

The quarters of the departments of the government and the homes of the cabinet ministers are the palaces of the kings and the old aristocracy, filled with the furniture, pictures, and tapestry chosen by the fathers of the class who must to-day humbly beg for permission to breathe the air of Paris. When you go to dine at one of these palaces, you finger curiously your knives, forks, and spoons, marked with the monogram of Louis XVI or Napoleon III, and you meditate upon the strange vicissitudes of fortune as you slowly drink a *liqueur* from the cellars of Fouché, Napoleon I's magnificent minister of police, or a glass of choice wine which Talleyrand, when he bought it, little thought would ever touch your lips.

Georges Clémenceau, the late Prime Minister, represents the possibilities of achievement to-day by the upper middle class, and incidentally the things most detested by the aristocracy. I once had a memorable afternoon with him at his house in the Rue Franklin, the street sacred to the name of our own great statesman democrat. He is a man in his early sixties, but looks eighty, wasted and worn with disease, but keeping at his post, a half-mocking smile and a joke eternally on his lips, laughing at fate, the personification

of the French gaiety that could not be quenched at the guillotine. He showed me his collection of rare Oriental rugs and bric-à-brac, having time to be an authority on the art products of the East; and confided to me that his greatest ambition was not for success in statesmanship, but in writing—the Prime Minister who longed to be again the journalist. I told him that Bismarck said to a friend of mine a few days before his death, "When I was in politics, I always thought that my passion was for a quiet country life. But now that I have had it, I realise that my passion was always for politics."

Clémenceau speaks perfect English, learned in the years he spent in New York as a young man, when he was glad to work at translating for five dollars a week, and where he afterwards found his American wife. But he objects to using any language but his own, appreciating the importance of keeping pure his literary style, and waiting for the happy moment when he can take up his editor's pen again.

In the other European capitals, the daily drive of the king and queen is a feature of the life. But one misses it in Paris. President Fallières takes a walk every morning, but Madame Fallières takes neither walks nor drives.

A witty Frenchman once said that Paris was invented so that foreigners should know nothing of France, and Madame Fallières belongs to that France of the provinces whose life is a sealed book to most strangers. It is the type of the *Petite Bourgeoisie* or

lower middle class of the South, descended from generations of women honest and modest, whose existence has been centred in the home, in keeping it in order, overlooking the servants, and living close to the children, a type conserved through generations and seemingly as little impressed with the march of time as the Sphinx of Egypt. Educated in the convent, and preserving throughout her life the convent custom of dressing in black, a devout Catholic, even if married to a politician of the Radical party, the woman of this class looks upon her home as a part of her religion, the most important part, and she lives in it almost as in a convent. Any kind of pleasure, even a promenade, is unknown to her. She is always in the home, and early in life loses the desire for anything else. "When you are in the home, the outside world does not trouble you," is her motto. The products of the vegetable garden, the best way of turning draperies that have become worn, recipes for jams and jellies, these make up her life. She speaks when spoken to, and makes a few shy remarks to her husband until he interrupts her with an authoritative, "Stop, that is enough." The husband is often a great talker, but in his home he talks on heedless of his listener, and is astonished if she exhibits powers of observation. He will then show a certain respect for his humble companion, and may even ask her advice at times, although seldom acknowledging it before the world.

As politics is the sole passion of the South of France, there are many women of this type in govern-

mental life in Paris, but not many of them have the good sense of Madame Fallières. She realises that she cannot take the rôle of a great lady, and makes no ridiculous attempt to do it. President Fallières has held numerous public offices, and she has had over twenty years of Parisian official life. But she has never become accustomed to it. When her husband was President of the Senate, the palace that goes with the office was much too splendid for her. What must the Élysée be? It is one of the most magnificent residences in the world, reconstructed at fabulous expense for Madame la Marquise de Pompadour, its very name bringing up visions of prodigal display, of fairy fêtes and golden banquets, of Paradise and the Elysian Fields.

We went to call upon her one day, this good, simple woman of the South, with a provincial accent in which the syllables fairly dance one into the other. Having traversed three immense *salons* ornamented with superb tapestry, we arrived at last where the mistress of the palace was receiving, the names of the ambassadors and ministers of the government being announced in thundering tones by the lackeys. We found a little woman, very plump and very dark, with regular features and bright black eyes, her folds of black hair slightly marked with grey drawn back in an old-fashioned way. She was dressed with a simplicity entirely provincial, and without a single ornament or jewel; and she greeted her guests with a timid, sincere smile, and a modest, deprecating manner, as if trying to excuse



Madame Fallières, wife of the President of France

herself for her surroundings. The strangers who filed past her each took a turn in resting for a few seconds in an armchair beside the big one of Aubusson, in which she was seated.

She had nothing to say. She has never travelled beyond France, as President Fallières never did until he came into his present high office. The last piece at the theatre—she has not seen it. The opera—the presidential box is seldom occupied by herself or her husband. The latest book—she has no life of books. Paris itself, she knows only in its streets and buildings, nothing of the great Paris of the arts.

But she wore a certain happy air which I knew was admiration for the husband who has mounted so high. I expressed my own admiration for him, and she took it with the pleasure of a bride.

At the Panthéon, during the ceremonies of the interment of Zola, when the shot of Grégori was fired, Madame Fallières heard it instantly and cried out, "Some one has shot at my husband." She thought of the tragedy of Carnot and suffered agonies during the moments that passed before the truth could be known. Speaking of it at this time, she said, "Those moments have more than outweighed any happiness I have enjoyed at my husband's success."

When the late King and Queen of Sweden were in Paris a few years ago, I watched her little figure hanging, almost suspended, on the arm of the tall King, as she walked down the banquet room through the saluting crowd to the sound of the "Marseillaise." She had

nothing to say through the long dinner. The silence, which in time became well-nigh funereal, was happily broken by the fanfares of the band.

Very few of the monarchs who, for political reasons, come to Paris as guests of the government, have the art to take the initiative in supplying the amusement which the host and hostess of the Élysée are unable to give. But the young King of Spain, although often an official guest, never ceases to find entertainment. He is full of youth and good spirits, dashes about the streets in his automobile at break-neck speed, enjoys everything, and sees the humorous side to the most tiresome, pompous function. At a state dinner he once sat near a remarkably beautiful and attractive American woman, who diverted him so well that he told her he hoped to see her in Madrid some day. She replied that she hoped he would some day soon visit the United States. To this he said, wrinkling his forehead with gravity, but with a twinkle in his eyes, "But you know I couldn't possibly come for several years. I must stay at home with the Queen and add to our family. It is our duty to the state."

Madame Fallières has the simplicity of dress and manner which belong to her ideals as they belong to her birth and class. She would gladly make the background of government social life less ceremonious and pompous. But it is as solemn as in the days of the ancient monarchy, and in sumptuousness unsurpassed in Europe. And what figures one comes across in the

midst of this splendour! What tragedies one could relate of cheap elegance and paste jewels, of the latest mode on ungainly figures, of Directoire gowns on one's laundress, as it were, the tragedies of trying vainly to fit the picture to its gorgeous frame. And the official hospitality of the state is full of the nightmares of incapacity, and ignorance of *les nuances* in the art of entertaining. Shortly after Madame Fallières took up her residence in the Élysée, she succeeded, after a protracted struggle, in discharging the presidential *chef* and installing her own time-honoured and beloved cook, accustomed to the daily visits to the kitchen of herself and her daughter—and how many an official dinner guest has, since then, accepted the lesson of experience and taken the precaution of eating a hearty meal at home before starting out! I remember being at a state concert when the composer Massenet sat down to play the accompaniment for one of his songs, at a piano rented promiscuously for the evening, and so cheaply made and so badly out of tune, that he jumped up in disgust and ran out of the room in a rage. It took some moments to find a young man who, having no reputation to lose, was willing to attempt the accompaniment. It is useless, however, for any one in the intimacy of official position to convey even the gentlest of hints to Madame Fallières, or to her daughter, so inseparable a companion that she was hardly absent from her mother's side for a day until, at the age of thirty-nine, she became the wife of the presidential secretary, Monsieur Lanes. To

any such delicate suggesting, they have both said, "We do the best we can." And Madame Fallières has declared openly, "Official life is not my life, and I have never learned to like it or to feel at home in it. I don't know what to do for the great people I am constantly compelled to have around my dinner table, and I shall never learn. I would gladly exchange it all for the simple little cottage in the country I had when I was first married." She and Madame Lanes industriously and energetically devote their days to official functions—to the opening of the *Salon*, where they are taken in a mad gallop to look at each individual painting; to the *Grand Prix* at the Auteuil races, and the *Grand Prix* at Longchamps, where they must receive and congratulate the owners of the winning horses; to the receptions of the Académie Française; to the ceremonies of the 14th of July, anniversary of the Republic's triumph; to the opening of charity bazaars, the distribution of school prizes, the celebration of official marriages, and to the funeral discourses for the distinguished dead. They drive forth in pomp and state, and return to dash through the gates of the Élysée before a gaping crowd of the curious and a retinue of magnificent flunkeys, who hasten to close the ponderous doors which shut them in behind a huge wall of formality, which no intimacy of lifelong friendship or relationship could penetrate during the President's term of office—as complete as that of the Empress of All the Russias.

But Monsieur Fallières continues the habit, estab-

lished many years ago, of a brisk morning walk for an hour or two, where one may often meet him shortly before noon, in the Rue Grenelle, in the Rue Vaugirard, in the Bois, or over in the Montmartre district—a short, thick-set peasant-politician, whose greatest pleasure it is to delve among the old bookstalls of the boulevards, or to enjoy the refinement of delight in a collection of classic verses upon fine parchment and in a rare art binding; a man of tender sentiment who, after his election as President of France, was not ashamed to be found with the tears streaming from his eyes, and to return with youthful abandon the ardent embraces of his friends. He has big, emphatic gestures, and a gentle, musical voice, speaking even to-day the *patois* of his province, having made no particular effort during his years in Paris to get the Parisian accent. "I was a country lawyer, as you would say in America, and I should like to know what I would have done without that provincial accent?" he once said, laughingly, to an American diplomat. "I owed my bread and butter to it." His grandfather was a blacksmith and his father a village recorder of deeds, and Monsieur Fallières never forgets that he is "a son of democracy." He has Gambetta's portrait over his desk, and his visitors often have it pointed out to them with the remark, "He, also, was a son of democracy." He goes every year for a month or two to his little country place at Loupillon to look after his vineyard—and one may buy the "vintage Fallières," at a slightly advanced price for such an honourable name.

And both he and Madame Fallières find many quiet days during the spring and summer out at the presidential château of "Rambouillet," within easy access to Paris, and in the neighbourhood of some of the most romantically beautiful and tragically interesting property now in the hands of the Republic—"Meudon," "St. Cyr," and "Bellevue." It was at that château of Meudon that the superb Francis I established the famous Duchesse d'Étampes; and Louis XV, the Du Barry; and where "Monseigneur le Dauphin" held his court, hardly less voluptuous and licentious than that of his father, Louis XIV, at Versailles. It was there, upon October 6, 1789, the day of the attack upon Versailles, that Marie Antoinette sent an agitated courier to tell her husband to quit his hunting party without a moment's delay and seek safety before the expected arrival of the Furies of the Halles; it was at Meudon where Marie Louise and the little King of Rome, attended by his *grande dame* governess, Madame de Montesquieu, spent the anxious days of the Russian campaign. The château has been completely destroyed, as also the wonderful château of "Bellevue," upon which La Pompadour expended years of artistic planning and millions of francs of the people's money; but you may look upon the marble from the old château at Meudon in the arch of the Place du Carrousel, where Napoleon I put it. St. Cyr was a wedding present from Louis XIV to Madame de Maintenon—or, at least, a present at the time the marriage is said to have taken place; it was to St. Cyr that she transferred

her school for young ladies of poverty and noble birth from the Château de Noisy, and which is still in existence, and where she retired upon the death of the King; where also Napoleon I established the military college which turns out every year 140 young officers, and is under the close supervision of President Fallières.

Rambouillet's big, battlemented round towers are about all that is left of the old mediæval castle which Louis XIV presented to his son by Madame de Montespan, the Comte de Toulouse, and which receives its name from the family of d'Angennes—a family infamous for the Jean d'Angennes who sold Cherbourg to the English; and famous for the Madame Charles d'Angennes, Marquise de Rambouillet, one of the most profoundly intellectual and exquisitely feminine *dames de salon* upon the record of Life, Marie de Medici's advisor in the architecture of the Palace of the Luxembourg, and the friend of Balzac, Corneille, and Richelieu, of Rochefoucauld and his *chère amie*, the matchless Madame de Longueville, royal mistress and cloistered nun. Rabelais was a frequent visitor at Rambouillet, and Rabelais's Cave can still be seen in the garden; and in the park, a remembrance of Louis XVI's *Ferme Expérimentale*, and the *Laiterie de la Reine*, which he made for Marie Antoinette—who was delighted with it and with Rambouillet for the extended period of a month, and then exclaimed petulantly, "*Que voulez-vous que je fasse dans cette crapaudière?*"

The château stands in the midst of acres of park

land, with avenues of stately lime trees, secluded walks, and gardens full of rare flowers; and beyond it is the great forest where Monsieur Fallières often takes a hunting party of government officials and men of the diplomatic corps, an expert himself in the sport of kings, having brought down many a stag and hundreds of pheasants and partridges. At such times, Madame Fallières sends an occasional invitation to lunch or tea to the women upon her official list, which is eagerly accepted by the foreigner on account of the opportunity it gives of seeing the interior of the château whose gates have been described "as the funeral arch through which the dynasties of France have passed to the grave." Francis I died at Rambouillet, and the room on the first floor has been carefully preserved by the Republic. Catherine de Medici and Charles IX were there when waiting for news of the battle of Dreux, and Henry II fled there when driven out of Paris. Napoleon I was at Rambouillet when, as a conqueror, he signed the decree reuniting Holland to the Empire; and there again, after the battle of Waterloo, to join the frightened Marie Louise —and to receive the next day the discarded Josephine; there again, in 1815, to sign his second abdication and plot for escape to America. Marie Louise met at Rambouillet the Allied Sovereigns, and from there set out for Vienna—and the obscurity of her second marriage. Louis XVIII was never there, but Charles X loved it so well that the Parisian mob of 25,000 revolutionists

sought for him at once at Rambouillet—only to find that he had fled and left behind his abdication.

What visions of the past you have, in this world of ineffaceable memories of royal queens and *reines de la main gauche*, whose brilliant mentality, captivating charms, and alluring beauty will inspire the pæans of the poets a dozen centuries hence—what visions of the past, and to-day, what a bewilderment of disenchantment, dishevelment of sentiment, in its regally furnished *salons*, making your willingly obedient obeisance to the virtues which would be so resplendent in another framing—those of the good and kindly, simple and sincere Madame Fallières!

III

THE FAUBOURG ST. GERMAIN

The diplomatic corps is, of course, accredited to the government, and it goes without saying that they are punctilious in performing their duties as to official calls, dinners, and receptions. But the representatives of the monarchical countries take their pleasures so evidently among the more congenial circles of the Faubourg that a wag once started the report that the different nations would send two ambassadors to France as at Rome, one for the government and one for society. Many an unselfish diplomat has attempted to remove the barriers between the two by inviting them both to his house at the same time, but has given up in despair. Any woman from the Faubourg who would go to the Élysée would be the subject of an immediate and denunciatory family council, and any American aspirant for the Faubourg would no more dare be seen at the Élysée than the Pope's chamberlain at the court of the King at Rome.

The government, however, even though the aristocracy were willing to receive them, would decline to be received. The line is drawn sharply and distinctly between enemies under a flag of truce. And one can easily comprehend that the Republic has every reason to look upon the nobility as an implacable foe that



The Duchesse de Rohan

would overthrow and destroy it if given a chance. The young men of the old families can give their services to their country in the army and in diplomacy. And a few have been able to get enough votes to be returned to the Chamber of Deputies. But they are allowed no offices of active influence.

I recall a dinner of an American woman living in Paris, which included a cabinet minister and his wife, and three or four members of the Faubourg St. Germain. The hostess was fortunate enough to have a box at the opera, and, as is so much the custom in Paris, we finished the evening there. As we entered the box, the young Marquis de M. whispered in surprise, with a glance at the minister, "He is really quite a gentleman," while the minister's wife told me later on under cover of the music, "I have heard all my life that the Faubourg was made up of worthless people, but they don't seem so despicable after all." The minister admitted that he had enjoyed the evening, but I noticed that a political newspaper of the following day criticised him for appearing in public in company with two of the best known members of the royalist party.

Madame Fallières' box at the opera was loaned to me one evening, and I remember the amusing experiences I had in making up the party. Half a dozen people who were eager to hear the much-talked-of production, given for the first time that night, and not at all reluctant about sitting in the best box in the house, dared not be seen in the President's box. Their royal-

ist paper, the *Gaulois*, would certainly have discussed it, and their friends taken them to task.

The old Faubourg has opened its doors very little to the American colony, and this in spite of the steady cannonading against its walls year after year by American millions. It has the reputation of being made up of people who have neither money, power, nor brains, but one must have a certain respect for any society that refuses to be bought when it is starving. There are, perhaps, a dozen or so American women who are actually at home in the Faubourg, and have an accepted position there; most of them were born to position, have lived in Paris for a quarter of a century, and enjoy it as a refreshing change from New York because in Paris they find what money cannot buy.

As to many of the rich Americans in Paris, they would be willing to decorate their mansions with orchids, to give a cup of tea to a duchess, however *déclassée* she might be in her own circle. They are the expatriates who try so hard to forget that they are Americans, and include the small but conspicuous set of American women who have been raised to the nobility by His Holiness the Pope, and whose husbands are as likely as not back in the United States managing drygoods stores or selling wholesale groceries. They include also the husbandless married American women in Paris, whom you meet sometimes at receptions, gorgeously attired and blazing with jewels, sitting in a seductive pose in a secluded corner of the conservatory, discussing with a sympathetic Frenchman the

well-worn theme of the unappreciative American husband who cares for nothing but the making of money. It is a subject in which the Frenchman is quite at his ease through the initiation of numerous American women; and he will be as sympathetic as she wishes, even to the second volume, which takes up the subject of the *union libre* in preference to the *union légale.* But among themselves, Frenchmen speak of erecting a monument to this unknown god, the American husband, whom they know only through portraits hanging on the wall in the Parisian home of the wife, and in the stream of money which he sends her to fling away in a foreign country. Full well they know that their wives would never be given such liberty!

In the time of the old Duc La Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville, French ambassador in London during the last years of the third Napoleon's régime, who died in the summer of 1908 at an advanced age, the Faubourg St. Germain had a leader to keep up its traditions. He lived like a patriarch in the Hôtel La Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville in the Rue de Varennes, the very heart of the Faubourg, maintaining his own home like a prince and building palaces in the neighbourhood for his children when they married. His principal château "Bonnetable" was kept up with equal state, and both in town and country the aristocracy had a gathering place in keeping with their old glory, and were frequently brought into contact also with artists and men of letters, intellectual and charming men and women of the *bourgeoisie.* He was candidly not par-

ticularly sympathetic with Americans; they represented the ideas which he fought against in his own country up to the day of his death; but he entertained the American diplomats accredited to France and the Americans in the circle of diplomatic society, and I have some vivid memories of him at Bonnetable—handsome and distinguished-looking, a courtier by instinct and a man of deep cultivation, easily and naturally *grand seigneur* from the traditions of inheritance, and inevitably so from the strength of character which directed his actions: the *beau idéal* of the ambassador of aristocracy. Through his second marriage with the wealthy Belgian Princesse de Ligne, he rehabilitated the family fortunes devastated by the early Revolution, and bought the old fortress-château of Bonnetable in the Sarthe department, one of the most delightful spots in France, with numerous little rivers winding in and out among its hills and forests, and the château itself a remarkably fine remnant of the Middle Ages, whose turret bears evidence of many an armed siege. He busied himself for the years of his early retirement in the reconstruction of the château, making it now one of the finest in Europe; and there he died, in the midst of his books and paintings and *objets d'art*, and surrounded by a patriarchal concourse of his immediate family and relatives, who represent among their titles the strongest defence of the monarchy in France. There was his son and the heir to his own title, the present Duc La Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville, whose wife was a princess of the Radziwill family, one of the

proudest in the world; and the head of the house of which he himself represented the younger branch, the comparatively young Duc La Rochefoucauld, who married the American, Maggie Mitchell, the daughter of Senator Mitchell. The old duke's only child by his first marriage with the Princesse Yolande de Polignac is the Dowager Duchesse de Luynes, whose son, the young Duc de Luynes, has taken a wife from the d'Uzès family, a sister of the Duc d'Uzès; and whose daughter, Yolande de Luynes, is now the Duchesse de Noailles, and mistress of the famous Château de Maintenon, built for Louis XIV's *reine de la main gauche*. The ambassador's second wife, the Princesse de Ligne, a handsome, stately woman, with exquisite manners, died in 1898, but she lived to see her children all settled near her, one daughter marrying her cousin, Prince de Ligne, and, after both of her parents had died, divorcing him; and the other daughter becoming Duchesse d'Harcourt. I remember that the old ambassador considered it a not unworthy achievement of his talents to have succeeded in marrying his family so exclusively in the ancient aristocracy. The American marriage of his kinsman was a *mésalliance* in his eyes.

The architectural beauties of Bonnetable embody some of the most gracious conceptions of the Renaissance, and in the grand *salon* there is a famous chimney-piece carved with the Rochefoucauld and Ligne coats-of-arms, but surmounted above the ducal crown by a nude female figure, representing Beauty at her toilette, holding in one hand a mirror, and in the other

a comb; a work of art which created furious gossip when it was placed, as it bears an extraordinary likeness to Mademoiselle Sorel, of the theatrical world.

But what resistlessly held my attention was always the family portrait gallery, of which the old duke was inordinately proud, and where he would willingly spend hours with an appreciative guest. The portraits and the old ambassador, standing there among them, made the bond complete with the seventeenth century court days, sumptuous beyond compare, and so unutterably tragic and terrible in their end. He had a portrait of his grandmother, who, at fifteen, a tall, majestic girl, was married by the Cardinal La Rochefoucauld to a stunted, puny boy of fourteen, the future Duc La Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville. However, he grew to masculine good looks and renowned charm, an *émigré* of the Revolution, who fled to Venice, where, on account of possessing a title as grandee of Spain, he ranked with the Doge. As this gave him the Doge's privilege of going through the gates of the city at any time of night, his escort was much sought for by the *habitués* of Venetian society, who enjoyed passing the summer evenings at the villas beyond the city gates. The bride of fifteen was an intimate of Marie Antoinette's circle, and when Paul I visited Versailles, it was the young Duchesse La Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville who was selected for the great honour of being the *quêteuse* or collector of the offertory after service in the royal chapel, the Queen loaning her her own diamonds to wear. She was a remarkable young woman, who



The Russian Grand Duke Michael and his morganatic wife Countess Torby, who live in exile in England. The Countess is the granddaughter of the celebrated Russian poet Pushkin

lived in the gay whirl of the Tuileries and Versailles, but considered it wicked to go to the theatre, to play cards, or to dance, and who spent her leisure moments trying to convert the court—a monumental endeavour! She went heroically through the terrors of the Revolution with her sister, the Comtesse de Montesquieu, and in her old age the duchesse founded the sisterhood of Nazareth, which sends out Catholic missionaries into the Holy Land. There is also at Bonnetable a portrait of the ambassador's father, the eccentric Duc de Sosthènes, the second son of the *émigré* duke and his saintly duchess, and who married a daughter of the Duc de Montmorency-Laval, Madame Récamier's lifelong friend. Unlike his father and mother, who were friendly to the first Bonaparte as a monarchical ruler, and unlike his son, the ambassador, who represented Napoleon III in London, the Duc de Sosthènes was so hostile to the Bonapartes that he personally helped to demolish the statue of Napoleon I on the column of the Place Vendôme. He was *Directeur des Beaux-Arts* early in the nineteenth century, when he ordered the dancers at the theatres to elongate their robes, and tried to prohibit the exhibition of nude figures at the Louvre. He died many years before his son had finished the reconstruction of Bonnetable—or one shudders to think what might have been the fate of the undraped charms of Sorel in the chimney-piece, surmounting the ducal crown of La Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville!

The Faubourg St. Germain, in other days so famous for its *grandes dames* and their *salons*, has to-day, alas!

so few worthy of the name. The old Duc La Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville's daughter, the Dowager Duchesse de Luynes, was scarcely twenty-one when the Franco-Prussian War made her a widow, but during the short period of her married life to one of the most intellectual men of his time, a Member of the Academy as well as an archæologist and historian of note, she held a brilliant *salon* in Paris. Her husband's death drove her into the country seclusion of his château "Dampière," and there, among the thousands of books in his library, and the works of art he had gathered from the ends of the world, she has spent most of her days since then with her two children—and now her children's children. Under the *nom de guerre* of Yolande Dalbert, she has frequently exhibited paintings at the *Salon;* she has travelled into Africa along the tracks made by Livingstone and di Brazza; and is occasionally seen in Paris—a dainty little figure with a face full of temperament and energy, and big, melancholy eyes to touch one's heart and haunt one's memory.

The splendid Hôtel d'Uzès in the Champs-Élysées used to be a meeting-place of fame and fashion in the *salon* of the Dowager Duchesse d'Uzès, a woman whose accomplishments and charm place her beside Madame Rambouillet and Madame Sévigné; but in a moment of mistaken patriotism the *hôtel* became a sacrifice for royalist France; one sees before it to-day only the equipages of the parvenu society into whose possession it has passed, and the Duchesse d'Uzès has practically

disappeared from her position of society leadership. But she is still the most famous horsewoman in France, a queen of Amazons, and a grandmother who rides to hounds with the ardour of youth, and still seen, although infrequently, driving four-in-hand in the Bois; a sculptor, author, inveterate reader, and traveller; and a gentle sister of charity, who for many years has gone twice a week among the unhappy victims of cancer in the hospitals, giving them the sympathetic tenderness and practical service of a really great soul.

About the only *salon*, properly so called, in the Faubourg to-day, is that of the Duchesse de Rohan, the daughter of the Marquis de Verteillac, and an heiress who brought to her husband as a *dot* her father's mansion in the Boulevard des Invalides, transformed now from the Hôtel Verteillac into the Hôtel de Rohan, a Louis XVI palace of stone near the dome of gold under which Napoleon I lies buried, and with spacious gardens at the back which take one far away from the city's roar and traffic. Within, there are immense reception rooms hung with Gobelin tapestry and filled with rare furniture, and a veritable museum of valuable paintings and souvenirs of travel from kings and queens, cabinet ministers, musicians, and poets; and upon Madame de Rohan's regular reception days, the dignified lackeys in the family livery usher in a distinguished throng, which makes its way up to the hostess —a small woman to whom middle age has brought a becoming *embonpoint*, but has not destroyed the radiant smile of youth which discloses lovely pearly teeth, nor

dimmed the sparkling dark eyes, which flash with a vivacity as sprightly and merry as those of a Louis XIV duchess. In the throng, one would find at times almost every one worth knowing in Paris, and representative of all classes—except the government. Independence is one of Madame de Rohan's marked traits of character, but not even she can so far forget the inheritance of her class as to have the conviction to accept or the courage to receive the government. She has, however, had the independence to attempt the recognition in society of well-known actresses, as is done in London. Sarah Bernhardt was her guest of honour one afternoon, and the few callers were carefully selected from a large list, that no woman would be invited who was likely to turn her back upon the divine Sarah—and among those who came there were very few who did not! With the most gifted artists of the Comédie Française, the experience has been much the same—the Faubourg does not want the actress. And when one remembers the inherent intimacy of generations in France between the stage and the *jeunesse dorée*, one can easily see why the Parisian *grandes dames* do not want the actress in their midst—and what embarrassing places society functions might become for the men!

Then, upon other unannounced days, the cosy little sitting-room at the end of the house sees many an intimate gathering of congenial souls, when one can admire at one's leisure the *chef-d'œuvre* of art in the house, Vigée-Lebrun's portrait of Madame Du Barry, a



Dining room in the Château de Josselin, the Brittany estate of the Duc and Duchesse de Rohan

radiant apparition under a big summer hat, which is fine enough to hang in the Louvre—and over a cup of tea one may discuss philosophy, poetry, philanthropy, politics, with some of the most interesting and witty people in Europe. The Duchesse de Rohan speaks perfect English, an uncommon accomplishment even among the best educated of the French; she is genuinely sympathetic with Americans, but especially appreciative of the American man, whose praises she is never weary of singing. She often has said, "Ever since I have been a matron, I have been helping to marry off my friends, and I know dozens of the prettiest, sweetest girls in France who can never get a husband because they cannot get a *dot*. But your American men marry without a *dot*—how wonderful! And then their wives come over here all alone and have a new gown every week from the big dressmakers we ourselves cannot afford to patronise more than once a year. A Frenchwoman could not dream of greater bliss than to be married to an American man!" She never advises the union of Frenchmen and American women. I remember that she said one day, "The Frenchman is brought up to consider himself the most important person in the family, and when he marries, his French wife takes it for granted that the *ménage* shall exist according to his wishes, however small or large the *dot* may have been. If the husband loves the country, the wife lives in the country, although she may herself detest it; if it is the city the husband prefers, she passes her life there. But the American woman is the one in her own nation

who is always first, who receives a better education, and the advantages of travel, and who dictates to the man. There cannot be two to be first in any *ménage—voilà!* "

Over in Brittany down by the sea, rising up among the rocks tier on tier, are the round towers of the granite fortress-château of the Rohan family, "Josseline," rebuilt early in the fourteenth century after Henry II of England, in one of his campaigns in Brittany, had stormed and destroyed it; to-day, very little altered in its exterior except that the warlike fortifications have disappeared and the rough outside walls bear the softening touch and colour of clinging vines and tendrils. Inside, it is a comfortable abiding-place of modern conveniences, whose rooms see many a gathering of Parisian society for house parties in the summer, a princely hospitality which several of the American diplomats in Paris have chosen as their final pleasure in relinquishing their posts and taking leave of France, going down to Josseline for a few days before boarding the steamer. The old *salle de garde* of the château is now the *salon*, and the most interesting of all the rooms, with its low beamed ceiling, which carries the coats-of-arms of the houses allied to the Rohans: those of Charlotte d'Orléans, Duchesse de Lorraine, and niece of Louis XIV; Marguerite, Duchesse de Rohan, the daughter of Sully; and the family arms of La Rochefoucauld, Montmorency, Navarre, Léon, Bretagne, and a dozen others among the oldest in France. It is at Josseline that Madame de Rohan finds the leisure and the inspiration to write the little poems which have a

place in the best magazines of Paris, to work in her studio, or out of doors, upon the sketches which display real artistic merit, to plan the executive management of her numerous Catholic charities in Paris and among the country folk about the château, to enter into the political studies of her husband who, although a pronounced royalist, is still a member of the Chamber of Deputies; and to follow the fascinating fad of the study of costume, with a collection ever increasing of little dolls in the peasant dress of Europe, in the battle garb of the old warriors, and the modern adornments of the present age in different countries.

The most amusing circle of the Faubourg St. Germain has been dubbed the *Faubourg Révolté*, and is led by a group of young married women, most of them related to the old Duc La Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville, and growing up under his influence in the gatherings for young and old which were so famous at Bonnetable. The members of the *Faubourg Révolté* would be the first, however, to disclaim any of the strong intellectual attainments of the old ambassador; and they voice the spirit of modern society in Europe, in declining to be bored—to be bored by people because they have happened to know them since they were born, or to be bored by things because they happened to have been approved by their grandfathers. They include among their number the Duchesse de Rohan's only daughter, the Princesse Murat, the American girl who was born Maggie Mitchell, and who is now Duchesse La

Rochefoucauld, and the wives of the young Duc d'Uzès, Duc de Luynes, and Duc de Noailles; and they form a coterie which leads the smart set of Paris, where gaiety sometimes runs riot. The dressmakers look to them to establish their most pronounced fashions after the actresses have introduced them; and the tailors look to their husbands to set the masculine mode, in the morning promenade of the Bois, or the afternoon in the Rue de la Paix, at the race course, or watering-place.

Among them the American Duchesse La Rochefoucauld takes her place without affectation or *hauteur;* her *petite* figure is that of a French marquise in an old-time painting, and her natural piquancy is the heritage alike of American birth and the highest Parisian manner. She brought her husband no *dot*, and the duke is himself a poor man for his position, but their international marriage, which was a desperate love match, is a very happy one. They live in Paris in the Rue Constantine, just off the Boulevard St. Germain, as it turns into the Rue Grenelle, where the Republic's flag waves over a line of old palaces made into official homes. And they also keep up the Château La Rochefoucauld in the Charente department of France, the most mediæval-looking place imaginable, of solid stone in the severe style of the sixteenth century, upon an elevation of thirty feet or more above the old keep of the fortress days, with massive turrets lifting themselves high in the air, and the picturesque valley of the Tardaire lying at the château's feet. But they seldom entertain there on a large scale, the head of the La Rochefoucauld

house being, in the first place, a quiet domestic man, who really cares very little for society, and especially at the present, since the death of his only son, a handsome, charming little boy, who was the sole heir to the title and estates in the direct line.

But the young Duc and Duchesse de Luynes give notable country entertainments at "Dampière," a château whose façade resembles that of the destroyed Tuileries, and which belonged in its early history to the Cardinal Charles de Lorraine; brought into the de Luynes family by Marie de Rohan, Duchesse de Luynes, and *en seconde noce* Duchess de Chevreuse (the title of the Lorraines), who made her son by the Duc de Luynes the master of the Lorraine château-fortress of Dampière. And at the Château de Maintenon, which the Duc de Noailles possesses through his ancestress, the niece of Madame de Maintenon, there are country-house festivities, in which Americans are sometimes, of late years, included, balls and private theatricals which are on a scale in keeping with the château, one of the most regal in Europe. It is, of course, inseparably linked with Louis XIV's life there with his favourite; his bedroom is to-day the principal *salon*, where hang portraits of himself, taken alone and with his mistress, as well as portraits of Louis XII, Louis XIII, Francis I, and Henry IV, which Louis XIV gave to Madame de Maintenon; and the private chapel has still its raised seat or "tribune," where the King could sit and watch the workmen at the aqueduct at the same time he was hearing the numerous masses which Madame de Main-

tenon prescribed. But aside from its historical interest, it is in itself a place of surpassing loveliness, the situation made enchanting by nature with the confluence of the rivers l'Eure and Voise, and the walls of the château veritable gems of Gothic architecture, rising majestic in the midst of gardens and avenues of trees which were laid out by Le Nôtre, the landscape artist of Versailles. The grand staircase of the château is a marvel of the Renaissance building, and the old *salle de garde*, which has become a modern dining-room, is decorated with rare woods in contrasting colours.

The picture gallery, which contains a good collection, is, however, a modern acquisition, the work of the father of the present Duc de Noailles. He was a contemporary of the old ambassador, Duc La Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville, and his son-in-law, the Duc de Luynes, father of the present Duchesse de Noailles, and, like them, *savant* as well as *élégant*. But in his royalist hatred of the French Republic, he felt a perhaps excusable contempt for the republic across the sea, although one of the fairest flowers of all the de Noailles was the Marquise de Lafayette, whose husband fought so gallantly for America's freedom. I remember that the old Duc de Noailles' satirical epigrams on the subject were famous in the Faubourg circles of his day. He affected great respect for the ancient republics of Athens and Florence, but said that they bore the greatness of the thing of precious value, while the United States had the renown merely of the huge: the mon-

strosity in size to which belonged the elephant and the whale!

Among the châteaux of the newer nobility, whose hospitality is naturally less entrenched about with the prejudice of royalist bitterness, is "Groisbois," the property of the Prince de Wagram, a tall, erect old man, still devoted to the hunting field, and every season adding to his trophies of the chase upon the walls of the château dining-room. His daughter, the Princesse Jacques de Broglie, is the *châtelaine* of the château, and its sumptuous doors are often opened—a sumptuous palace in the depths of the country, full of memories of the first Prince de Wagram, Napoleon I's great general, and of his *châtelaine*, Madame Visconte, one of the beauties of her time. Upon the very day that the avaricious and pretentious Fouché, its former owner, sold Groisbois to Wagram, a postchaise from Paris stopped at the door, and Madame Visconte entered upon the arm of the general; and one can to-day walk along the terrace where they so often sat together, and where Wagram laid the laurels of his victories at the feet of his mistress. Marie Louise, with Madame de Montesquieu, stayed at Groisbois just before leaving France forever, saying, "We are here with the Emperor's best friend"—a friend who soon deserted to the republic!

Then, in the midst of the Parisian surroundings of the Bois, is the old château "La Muette," a hunting lodge when Francis I followed the chase in the Bois, and a royal dwelling which Marie Antoinette occupied the

night of her arrival in France and the day before her marriage; owned to-day by the Comte de Franqueville of the family of Érard, the mechanical genius, who produced the piano. The Comtesse de Franqueville is an Englishwoman, the sister of Lord Selborne, lately British governor of South Africa, and the daughter of the first Lord Selborne, who was Lord Chancellor of England, and one of the few English friends of the anti-slavery cause of the North during the American Civil War. The house, with its big park, in which 3,000 of the armies of the Allies had dinner *al fresco* in 1815, form together a country estate in town, and during the winter season there is a series of dinner parties at La Muette, which bring together many well-known people of diplomacy, literature, and art. And, since the separation of the church and state in France, La Muette, on account of its spaciousness and the possession of a private chapel, as well as its convenience to Paris, has become practically the official mansion of Catholicism. Comte de Franqueville entertained there for a week in 1906 four cardinals and eighty bishops of his church; and almost any afternoon, when one would be going there to call, one would meet a quiet-faced nun coming in or going out, or see a frocked priest reading his breviary as he strolled in the park.

I was staying for a few days with some French people when they gave the coming-out ball for their only daughter, a gifted, lovely girl of eighteen, who had a dowry of a million francs left to her by an American



Picture Gallery in the Château de Maintenon, the home of the Duc and Duchesse de Noailles

aunt by marriage, who had failed to give an heir to the old title, or even to be blessed by a daughter.

In the ball-room the mothers sat around the wall in frigid silence and strained anxiety, taking mental notes on the eligibility of the young men and the *dot* which each girl would be able to bring to her husband. The little Marguerite was the richest one in the room, and many a jealous, envious glance did she receive. Both the girls and the young men were shy and awkward under the battalion of maternal eyes over against the wall —who could blame them? In the midst of a dance there was a great commotion on the floor, a pearl necklace had broken, and every one was scrambling for the scattered gems when the girl herself sobbed out that it was not hers, that it had been borrowed. Her mother turned crimson with anger as those sitting near her gave her pitying glances, in which there was a decided touch of malice, that she had been discovered in a trick to make her daughter appear richer than she really was.

After every one was gone, and I was upstairs before my fire, brushing out my hair for the night, I heard a light step behind, and two soft arms were around my neck and a soft cheek laid against my own. It was Marguerite, and she wanted to talk about the party, but the beginning and ending was about my own country, where the girls were able to get married without a *dot*. "And the men often, really often, marry just for love?" she asked for the hundredth time, her pretty dark eyes wide with wonder. "Why, I never even

heard of a girl among my friends who could get married without a *dot.* They must be extraordinary men, those American husbands!" Then, as a very great secret, she brought out a little poem she had written in the park a few days before, describing it in its springtime freshness, lying in the midst of the noisy, dirty city, when the great trees clasped arms overhead in the broad avenue, and the wild flowers carpeted the lawn, a poem as dainty as a violet hidden in the grass in the morning dew. She had a genuine gift for writing, and, after years of pleading, had been allowed to study at home the great masters of ancient and modern literature. But the family never discussed it, and would have denied it to most of their friends.

"They would never get me married even with my *dot,* if people knew about my writing," Marguerite said frankly, as I tucked her in her own bed, the beloved poem under the pillow. "But the American girls can really and truly get married just for love?" she murmured again wistfully. And I told her again, "Just for love, dear heart," as I kissed her good-night.

Marguerite and I went to lunch one day over in the Boulevard St. Germain with an old man of eighty and his wife, a prince distinguished as a diplomat during the Empire, which he served faithfully in various foreign missions, but condescendingly enough, and only because the success of the royalists was so hopeless. The princess had been no less noted for her beauty and tact, and European society of her day knew no more brilliant

entertainments than hers. When the republic came in, they refused to swear allegiance, and gave their fortune to the Orléans party, passing now their old age in an attic. The château of his fathers, which had opened its doors in welcome to a dozen kings, the old diplomat sees to-day in the hands of a Parisian shopkeeper, who has gone to enormous expense to put the newest, most resplendent gold in the entrance decoration and about the roof, where it can be seen a mile away, and who spent a year in making the stained, ancient stone walls, with the wonderful toning which centuries had given them, and which artists came from over the seas to admire—in making them as hideously white and dazzling as the cutlery and glass in his emporium.

We made our way up to the fifth floor of a dilapidated mansion, where there was no sign of a carpet visible about the halls, but where the stairs were made of Italian oak and the balustrade inlaid in perfect workmanship. A tiny, grey-haired serving woman curtseyed as she opened the door, and in the little *salon* our host met us with a deep bow, and raised our hands to his lips with grave ceremony. He was small and slender, but with the unmistakable something which we call a "presence," for want of a better name. No room, however large, but would have seemed occupied when he entered it. The princess was small, also, but exquisite in form even to-day, and with a delicate colour coming and going on her smooth cheek, while her bright, black eyes sparkled with intelligence, vivacity, and humour.

The *salon* held a piano, where the prince said he beguiled many a lonely hour, and portraits of the illustrious men and women of his house, aristocratic, proud faces delineated by famous brushes, and peopling the narrow room vividly, startlingly, with echoes of other days and manners. In the dining-room our friends had conserved their one remaining treasure, a collection of cameos, for which they had been offered many times a sum large enough to keep them in comfort for the rest of their days. It was a collection which Lorenzo the Magnificent might have envied, and there were, indeed, two jewels from his store, a fourteenth century cameo showing a Medusa head cut in emerald, and an onyx pendant of Augustus Cæsar, encircled with precious stones, which bore the Medici name Lavr. Med. engraved in the corner. And there were three originals of the replica cameos jealously guarded as originals at St. Petersburg, Vienna, and the British Museum in London, which that wily Italian of the last century copied perfectly, and then gave to turkeys to swallow, having discovered that the only thing needed to take away the extreme high polish and give them the touch of the veritable antique, was a few hours in a turkey's gizzard. The grandfather of our prince had been ambassador at Rome when the Italian died, and had secured the originals for much less than the replicas had been sold, remorse and a Catholic priest with the last sacrament for those about to die having greatly assisted at the bargain. Pale yellow

and honey-coloured chalcedony, the lovely violet of fluor-spar, the red of the sardonyx, and the creamy tints of the onyx set the meanly furnished room aglow with splendour.

I have never been able to remember what we had to eat that day! I have visions of dark-red claret showing in soft, warm tints through tall crystal bottles at each place, and of a big bowl of beaten brass, thin and worn, in the centre of the table, from which trailed some sweet-swelling roses, a tinge of bronze on their yellow petals; of a delicate Venetian lace cloth and Sèvres dishes, just enough for the four of us at the table, which Louis XV had sent himself direct from the Tuileries; a vision, later on, as we descended the dark staircase, our hands on the inlaid balustrade, of our two old friends beaming down upon us, the prince looking as if he had stepped from the frame of one of his ancestors, holding high a heavy silver candlestick to light our way.

It was just before I left Paris that I saw them again, one night, in a crowded *salon* at a private view of pictures. No one seemed to notice them, a shabbily dressed old man tenderly guiding an old lady on his arm, who wore an ancient sealskin cape which no American millionaire's wife would have dared offer to her maid. The elegantly dressed women and their immaculate escorts jostled unconcernedly against them to get in closer range of the pictures. But there was no picture on the walls comparable to the one they made. Tears

sprang to my eyes as I watched them. They were a remnant of that France, full of wrongs unsupportable, but also of surpassing charm—gone now, never to return.

IV

ROME

PAPAL COURT OF THE VATICAN

Going often down to Rome, loving the book of history that unfolds its illuminated pages at every turn, loving the peace and repose which still linger by the banks of Horace's Tiber, loving the frank cordiality of its people and the soft glory of its skies—I must yet always have a week or two of disillusion, of disenchantment. Arriving cross and fatigued after the long journey south in the dirty train, there is nothing about the modernly commonplace railroad station to soothe you. The cadaverous, brutally beaten cab horses are something you must get used to seeing without a shudder. The rippling syllables of the liquid Italian tongue you must hear shrieked at you in the harsh cries of a hundred street vendors, and shrieked at you in the drawing-room as well as in the street. You must crucify your Anglo-Saxon ideas and ideals, and forget about it, you must cease to be outraged in what you see and what you hear. You must learn to accept with the easy nonchalance of tolerance the code of the Latins, to which they say they have as much a right in their own country as you have to your own. You must not be insulted when a Roman prince condescends to the man-

ners of a stable boy and ogles you in the Corso, when your Italian servant helps himself out of your purse, when the shopkeeper charges you two prices for one, and then gives you your change in bad money besides. You must learn to do the same thing yourself, if you can. If you want to enjoy Rome, you must learn to do in Rome as the Romans do.

There is the vast, low-lying Campagna, where the city gates finish the world of Rome and civilisation; without is the desert, wild and deserted on the west clear down to the sea, the snow peaks of the Alban Mountains cold and barren to the south, and the gloomy stretch of the Ciminian Forest to the north; a desert full of its own peculiar charm and mystery later on, but at first bringing to me only mournful sensations, even a thrill of terror. I wander out the Porta del Popolo to the great Castle of St. Angelo, surmounted by its heroic bronze figure of the archangel Michael, sheathing his sword, as Gregory the Great beheld him in a vision over four hundred years ago, and come back past St. Peter's, the most famous church in Christendom, rising upon the site of the gardens of the emperors—and see, sheltering now in its shadow, nothing but poverty and swarming squalor, even in Raphael's palace nearby, built by the master Bramante himself. Afterwards, when I go that way again, I remember that poverty and squalor are the birthright of these people, not to be sold for such a thing as a mess of pottage, with soap and water thrown in; and that the whining beggars who dog my steps are sleek rascals all, kicking their

stout heels in the sun from sheer delight of living. I learn in time to pass them by unmoved, to fling a disdainful wave of the hand to their muttered offerings of five hundred prayers for my soul's salvation in return for a single small *centesimo*. I learn in Rome to do as the Romans do.

There are the two diplomatic corps at Rome, the so-called "black court" accredited to the Pope at the Vatican from the Catholic countries, and in perpetual mourning for the loss of the temporal power; and the "white court," made up of the diplomatists accredited to the King at the Quirinal from all the governments of the world, Catholic and Protestant. But as the King is Catholic as well as the Pope, Catholicism naturally permeates all society as it permeates all the life; and it gives me always among my first and final memories of the narrow, cobbled streets, where the Madonnas of wood and porcelain look down in wan decay from high niches in the walls—the flashing pictures made by the bands of Catholic students from the different nations, in bright red gowns, or blue, or grey, wending their way in the daily promenade to the Villa Borghese or the Appian Way. Among your most interesting invitations will be those for the ultra-fashionable masses at the Pantheon, especially of recent years, the Mass in commemoration of the death of King Umberto, which comes towards the end of the winter season, and is one of the few ceremonials of state and splendour left to the modern Roman life. The Pope sends his own choir from the Sistine Chapel, and the

noble pagan temple with its ancient walls of Augustus and Agrippa receives an exclusive gathering of society *habitués* and officials in full-dress uniform, of the government, the court of the King, and the whole diplomatic corps accredited to the King, who kneel on the porphry and granite pavement close to Raphael's tomb. A long cordon of soldiers lines the streets of approach and exit, and the ambassadors with their suites have the right of way—flying off in motor cars, followed by their young secretaries, handsome, graceful courtiers garbed in the height of the mode in the cut and decoration of their gay uniforms, exchanging greetings with the well-dressed, chattering crowd, and scarcely out of the church before the inevitable cigarettes appear.

If you are not rabidly anti-Catholic, you soon drift into its fashionable ways, you are glad to leave your card upon the cardinals and archbishops whom you happen to know, and eager to accept invitations where they will be found. They live in state, as their position demands, with the households of royal princes, and in *palazzos* furnished with regal magnificence and the exquisite taste of the connoisseur. Their hospitality is extended only to men, but women frequently receive them in a quiet way for a game of whist or bridge in the evening, played in a separate room from the other guests, as when royalty is entertained. And it is still a ceremony of importance to receive a cardinal which one witnesses with a sigh for the days when it belonged among so many stately customs which the present gen-

eration has impatiently swept aside. His big lumbering carriage with its mourning livery of the "black court" deposits him at the *palazzo* of his hostess, an august figure robed in scarlet followed by his suite, and he makes a royal progress as he ascends the stairs, a tall footman walking upon either side to hold aloft a flaring candle in a high ecclesiastical candlestick. It is not every hostess who possesses them, but her sharp-witted *major domo* knows where they can be obtained; he produces them in no time, and anything else necessary, and is honoured for life if His Eminence gives him the veriest glance at the foot of the stairs.

But the Pope is a voluntary prisoner in the Vatican, and is seen no more upon the streets, and the Catholic ceremonials of pomp and pageantry which were the glory of Europe as well as the glory of Rome, have forever departed—as well as the days when every man and woman who sought even a recognition in society knew that it was *en rigueur* to attend the Papal audiences, sitting humbly in the antechamber for three or four hours. The famous Pio Nono (Pius IX), who deserted the Quirinal upon the approach of Victor Emmanuel II, used to make a wonderful progress through the streets upon Christmas Eve. After the clanging of a thousand bells from all the belfries of the Holy City, the gala carriages left the Vatican, carrying the Pontiff and his suite for the midnight Mass at St. Maria Maggiore, the Swiss guards surrounding the carriages and filling the streets, their helmets and long

halberds shining out beneath the torches, and the members of the Papal household wrapped in Spanish cloaks over their black satin clothes, high ruffs, and the heavy gold chains about their necks. The Catholic soldiers of Europe, following the example of Charlemagne, fought for the privilege of assisting at the Christmas Mass of the dawn in the Papal chapel, the chosen one drawing his sword from its scabbard at cockcrow before the altar, and reading the gospel of the day from the open book of the Mass, afterwards receiving from the Pope a sword which had been blessed and a hat of crimson velvet lined with ermine.

Prince Torlonia, the Papal banker, pandered to the fastidious and extravagant tastes of the Pontiff, and contributed to the splendour of church ceremony by sending the *santo bambino* (the image of the Holy Child) to the sick for their consolation, in a carriage almost as magnificent as the Pope's, the *bambino* robed in silk and covered with diamonds. The Torlonia balls and dinners were hardly excelled in the olden history of Rome, and were compared to the feasts of Lucullus, and the prince created a sensation whenever he rode through the streets. But it was, after all, only the sensation of the parvenu, and he was but one of many Roman princes who made their leisurely way down the Corso, their path cleared by running footmen and mounted grooms with staves striking out right and left, whose gilded coaches had their three powdered footmen at the back, one more than a cardinal, and who, if they chanced to meet the Pope, dismounted to

pray in the street, kneeling upon a gorgeous pillow carried by a lackey, while another held an umbrella over the bared head.

Leo XIII, Pio Nono's successor, was a man of the same temperament and ideas, and in his early years he played much the same rôle as the supreme head of society as well as of the church, even though confined within the boundaries of the Vatican. This is the largest palace in the world, with over a thousand apartments, with art galleries, museums, libraries, chapels, and residences splendid enough to rival those of the richest and proudest city of the world. Upon its *piazza* an army of twenty thousand men could be drawn up, rank and file, cavalry, infantry, and artillery; and its gardens are so extensive that Pius X takes an automobile upholstered in white velvet when he wants to make a tour of them, and its park lies so hidden in its forest depths that it shelters a villa into which he moves when summer comes and he needs a change of mountain air. Catholic ambassadors in court uniform and bands of pilgrims pass daily in and out, and at certain times all the members of the College of Cardinals may be seen dismounting from their carriages, sweeping past you with majestic aloofness, their wide mantles of scarlet brocade caught by the air of movement and spreading themselves out on the broad marble steps like glorious wingèd creatures from another world.

I remember seeing Leo XIII upon his ninetieth birthday, a day when Catholic princes and dukes gathered

in the Eternal City from every quarter of the world, and the dignitaries of the church traversed continents and crossed the seas to present their congratulations. Double rows of Swiss guards lined the entrance to the Vatican, wearing the odd costume designed by Michael Angelo, with bagging trousers and full sleeves, made of dark-blue cloth patched with brilliant red and white, and answering my questions in German—much to my astonishment, until I remembered that they were recruited from among all the Catholic countries. The corridors were half-full of soldiers, Italian this time, but singularly empty of visitors. However, when I reached the Sala Ducale, the reason was apparent; I was very late, as most of the people expected had already arrived, an hour before the time appointed. This antechamber to the famous Sistine Chapel was, with the Sala Regia, originally intended for the reception of ambassadors, and it was filled that day with the most distinguished among the thousands of visitors in Rome. The national types represented were from every land, but there was a common mark of aristocracy in bearing and language—that is, at first.

The tickets issued filled it scarcely more than half full, and there was a good view for every one toward the front, where the Pope would appear, making his progress through the room. But no one seemed to think this could be so, and some of the early comers among the women had brought campstools with which they had barricaded the front, while their escorts formed a bodyguard to protect them. When the situ-



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The Pope starting out for a walk in the Vatican Gardens

ation was realised, a *fusillade* of stinging rebukes was hurled upon the front. Devout young priests in parties made determined onslaughts upon the territory. Elegantly dressed ladies madly sought to win its ground. Gentlemen in silk hats pushed toward it with strong masculine arms and big masculine feet. But it remained victorious and serene. Several times it rose to its feet and the crowd surged forward with impetuous glee. But in vain—the campstool was an excellent weapon of defence.

The Pope was an hour late, and during the intervals of battle I heard all the court gossip of Europe, quickly moving tongues speaking in the universal society language of French, divulging the most scandalous things and sparing no one.

The ambassadors and officials of the court began arriving, and went direct to the Pope in the Sistine Chapel, escorted through our room by the chamberlains, looking like pictures come to life from the fifteenth century, with high-neck ruffs, black velvet breeches, and big buckled shoes, the ambassadors resplendent in gold lace and jewelled orders, and their wives with fortunes represented in their black lace mantillas, the head-dress of the Papal court, and the gems worn with them. But the gowns, always black, were old-fashioned in style, and as shabby as etiquette would allow, garments preserved for this one ceremony year after year. There were several well-known beauties, young ones, and maturer ones who challenged in the strong light of day the betrayal of their rouge and enamel, as they turned

their faces toward us and sent smiling glances from brilliant eyes to masculine friends as they passed.

At last the Swiss guards dropped their arms in a quick salute, the thousands of people in the outer rooms began to shout, and we knew that the Pope was coming. I had a rapid vision of faces, most of them old, most of them keen and strong, of robes of ermine, of black velvet or flaming scarlet, cries of "*vive le Pape*," of cheers in a multitude of different tongues. And then the Pope appeared, the cardinals walking before the sacred chair, which was carried high above the crowd, immense peacocks borne upon either side, and the Pontiff himself in robes of dazzling white, the head shaking beneath its triple golden crown, the mouth loosely open, and the long slender hand trembling with extreme old age as it was extended in blessing. The demonstrations of the people moved him profoundly, he rose to his feet, his thin form shaking, and stood with arms outstretched as if to clasp them all to his wasted bosom. The eager crowd vainly sought to kneel, but could not, so great was the stress. He fell back exhausted upon his chair, and slowly disappeared from view.

It was some years later, when I went one morning with a small party of friends to pay my respects to Pius X, and we were ushered into a room where we soon saw him coming from his own apartments through a long line of doors, a stooping figure not very tall, clad all in white, except for his red shoes, the big jewelled cross about his neck, and the big jewelled ring upon his hand.

He walked slowly, years and anxiety having left their mark upon the once vigorous frame and the placid face. There was a young girl with us on her way to Paris to enter a convent school, and he spoke at length with her, giving her his blessing with his hands resting tenderly among her dark curls. He left us to make a tour of the other rooms beyond, filled with large gatherings of people all in black, rooms from which there was no sound save the ticking of the Florentine clocks upon the mantels, and the clicking of the rosaries which the faithful ones carried in their hands to be blessed. When he returned on his way back, the little girl ran impulsively to meet him, and he gave her a bright smile that banished for the moment the lines of deep care. As we came out and walked down the steps, the sun streamed through the myriad-coloured windows at the top, and the perfect purity of the cold white marble was flooded with bright sunshine and glowing colour, as if the asceticism and austerity of the great church with its vows of celibacy and renunciation, had been touched by the warm, pulsating life of hearthstone love which the peasant may know, but not the priest.

But outside the Vatican and near the Porta del Popolo, the Pope's two aged sisters live in an apartment near the sky, where they can see his windows day and night. They do their own housework the same as fifty years ago, when their brother was an unknown student, and two or three times a week they come over to the Vatican about seven o'clock in the evening, in their quiet dress, practically the dress of peasant women,

bringing him handkerchiefs they have made or socks they have knitted for him. It is just before his light supper, but they never stay for it; Papal etiquette forbids. They talk in the Venetian dialect, which he loves so dearly, and about the Venice he can never see again, either living or dead, and then they wend their way back to the top of their house to watch his windows. Pius X makes no state appearance to an assembled multitude in St. Peter's, as his predecessors did, and he does not come in the pomp of a crowned sovereign before tens of thousands of kneeling subjects in the *piazza*. But every night just before going to bed, he stands for a moment before his window and turns his face over to a window in the distance, where two gentle old women, the beings he loves most in all the world, are watching for him.

Leo XIII set his decree sternly against the mingling of the two courts, the "blacks" and the "whites," but the present Pope, a man of the people, who had no desire for the Triple Crown, taking it with a sad heart in response to the demands of the College of Cardinals which found him the only one its members could agree upon—let it be known soon after his accession that he would not be displeased if the two courts met at the same houses. One night at the close of a ball, as the footman calling the carriages shouted, "The Spanish ambassador's carriage," he was answered simultaneously by two coachmen, "Which Spanish ambassador?" For they were both there! It was an event in the history of Roman society, although one would have to know how

strong and bitter had been the marking line only a decade ago, to realise what an extraordinary change it indicated. To-day, the aristocracy of the "black court" openly complain, "There is no longer any society of the Vatican," and the "blackest of the black" appear at so many of the "white" houses that they are humorously spoken of as "grey." The *dames d'honneur* of the Queen dance with the Papal diplomats at a dozen balls during the winter season—and there is now but one Spanish ambassador accredited at Rome. But as far as diplomatic etiquette is concerned, the representatives of the two courts are strictly *persona non grata* the one to the other, this being a mere formality, but for that very reason creating a diplomatic situation which is the most delicate in Europe. More than one ambassador, or his wife, or his secretary, has had to be reminded at the last moment that a friendly hospitality planned for was enough tinged with the official to be possibly interpreted as an offence either to the Pope or to the King. Thus, when the first Lincoln birthday banquet was given recently in Rome under the auspices of the American ambassador, and Archbishop Ireland, who happened to be in Rome, was invited to make the principal address, no one realised what a blunder it was until an intimation came from the Quirinal that it would be an affront to the King. The ambassador was accredited to the King, and the guest of honour at the banquet could not be a member of the Papal court as, of course, the archbishop was when in Rome.

V

SOCIETY OF THE KING'S COURT AND THE QUIRINAL

I HAVE always come into monarchical Rome direct from republican Paris. In Paris, art, in the hands of a far-seeing government of the people, has laid out smooth, splendid streets, inviting you as with a trumpet call to join the gay crowds that throng them, built monuments of beauty and inspiration in public places to challenge your eye and arrest your mind; filled the parks with merriment-making casinos flashing out a hundred charms of diversion. The republic wants its people, wants you to forget, wants you to exclaim every hour of every day, "Paris! how seductive with the lure of the present, how enchantingly fresh, how young you are!" But in Rome, the people are to remember; an astute monarchy bids them remember when Rome was not a small, politically insignificant Papal State, but imperial Rome, proudly perched upon her seven hills, Rome, the mistress of the world. Excavations get enormous official donations, learned societies of antiquity are fostered at the public expense; Rome is made the centre of that Italy whose fatal gift of beauty was her funeral dower; the sacred shroud of historical association is hung over the city as a national *drapeau;* government and people wrap them-

selves in it as in the toga, trade upon it commercially as the stocks and bonds of prosperity, join together, vie with one another in forcing from your lips, "Rome, how old, old, old you are!"

But it is the new men of new Rome who have done all this, and they care little for the old things that are useless. The Roman prince rides forth in state no more. The busy streets are crowded with merchants from Turin, Milan, or Naples, whose ancestors were peasants, perhaps, a century ago, whom the prince might have kicked like a dog out of his path on the street. They are senators and they sit in the Chamber of Deputies, they are generals and ministers of the crown. They sometimes have the Order of the Annunciata, and they and their wives can sit down in the sovereign's presence, while princes and princesses must swallow their bitter chagrin and stand. Among the thousand balconies of the Corso, where the palaces of the families of Chigi, Sciarri, Doria, Ruspoli, and Theodoli used to be the envy of the world, with their pictures, tapestries, and bronzes, where several hundred retainers were housed, and splendour and opulence were at their height—how few of them are even opened to-day in the simplest hospitality, in how many does gaunt poverty stalk the only guest!

It was about a decade ago when, during a visit in Rome, I attended a banquet at the Capitol, going in under a purple silk canopy extending over the passage from the weather-beaten statue of Marcus Aurelius, which rises majestically upon the Capitoline Hill before

the old hall of the senators. The tables were laid in one of the sculpture rooms: there was the bronze boy of Pythagoras extracting a thorn from his foot, the youthful, bent-over head, and slender body ideal in their Greek beauty, and as immortal as the gods; and Nathaniel Hawthorne's Marble Faun of Praxiteles, with the same grace and clinging atmosphere of untamed, woodland things that Miriam and Hilda found in it, and in Donatello; but supreme above them all was the Dying Gaul, sitting on his shield, unconquered, and as unconquerable as the barbarian of freedom and democracy was before decaying Rome—and is to-day. Afterwards, some friends took me where the civic council of present-day Rome sits in the room where Petrarch was crowned; and then we climbed to the top of many stairs to the apartment of the mayor of Rome, the *syndic*, as he is called, to see where his windows commanded one of the most superb of views, under the moonlight, of Cæsar's Forum, where Mark Antony made his impassioned speech, and of the huge Coliseum stretching its great bulk in the distance like the skeleton of a mammoth gladiator, whose bones lay whitening in the desert. The *syndic* was then Prince Colonna, not a typically-looking Italian, as his skin and hair were blond, and he wore the Englishman's monocle to set off his well-balanced head and thoughtful face. But he was distinguished not less for his intelligence and patriotism than for his exquisite manners and quiet air of *le grand seigneur*, and he was

typically "the son of many princes." But following him in office, Signor Nathan has come to preside over the destinies of the city, a rich Jew, who has preserved the name and the faith of his English mother—that is all they know about his lineage in Rome. Rumour says that he is the son of Mazzini by a secret tie during his exile in London. But the mayor himself does not say, and people do not seem to trouble even to ask, so careless of lineage is the political Rome of to-day.

I have sometimes wondered if this indifference to lineage has had anything to do with the extraordinary popularity of the American, for it is undeniably the fashionable thing to be an American to-day in Rome—along with the *nouveaux riches* among the English middle classes. Englishwomen have intermarried at Rome for centuries, but until recently they were from the great Catholic familes of the nobility—like the beautiful and high-spirited Princess Borghese, the daughter of the last Catholic Earl of Shrewsbury, about whom many a stirring story is told. She was walking alone in the street one day upon an errand of mercy, when she was followed by a well-known dandy, who failed to recognise her under her heavy veil. Waiting until she was directly in front of his club, where half a dozen of his friends were watching, the princess suddenly lifted her veil and handed him a piece of money as if to a beggar, making all Rome shake with laughter at the man's expense.

There are about a dozen American princesses to-day in Rome, and almost as many more who were English; and I think it would be difficult to find a good-looking English or American girl with even a modest competence who has had a season there without at least one proposal to remain forever. The nobility are, in themselves, like all Italians, the simplest, most unassuming people in the world; and while I am so often longing in other cities for Thackeray and a new "Book of Snobs," I remember no such times in Rome—except among the Americans or the English. One was at a large reception, a few years ago, given by an Englishwoman, which I took in, in going down a list one spring afternoon. Inconspicuous and apparently untitled people were wandering aimlessly about unintroduced and forlorn, while the hostess was saying, "Dear Countess, do stay, the Princess has promised to look in late."—"Dear, dear Marquise, please don't go, the Princess positively promised me she would come." And from the corner issued the well-known nasal twang of one of my countrywomen recently united to a scion of an ancient house, "He sez to me, sez he, Marquise——." I caught something about "Louvre" and "art," and then, as I drew nearer, these words of wisdom, "But I sez, sez I, 'Count, after you've lived in Rome, you don't care for the art in the Louvre—that's what education does for you!'" Not being a countess or a marquise, I was allowed to find my unobtrusive way out fifteen minutes after I had entered, and met the princess going in, a genuine, intellectual woman, with whom I had had many



Count Gionatti, who, as the Prefect de Palais to the King of Italy, is the most important Court official of monarchical Rome. His wife was Miss Kinney, of New York

talks on subjects far deeper than snobs. She gave me an amused, flickering smile as she glanced in and whispered, "Are they all, all, English and American?"

The coachman who was taking me on my round was, so my friends had informed me, the heir to one of the oldest titles in Italy, the heir to nothing else, however; and the lady who came every Monday for my laundry was born a countess. But I had the feeling, as I drove away, that it might mean a little, after all, to be a princess in Rome.

My recollections of the Quirinal go back to the latter years of King Umberto's reign. Italy was not particularly important diplomatically, especially to the United States, and while the American representatives were sometimes men of birth and cultivation, like Waldorf Astor for instance, they were again sometimes the reverse. One of them was persistently making the *faux pas* of asking the King how his "wife" was, to which King Umberto, with a smile, invariably replied that Her Majesty was well, although at the time Her Majesty was not his wife in the real sense of the word—and the whole court knew it. And there was a young secretary who allowed the Queen to receive letters from autograph fiends who desired her autograph—and enclosed stamps for the reply!

The Americans married into the Italian aristocracy were *en évidence* at Queen Margherita's court as at Queen Elena's, and acquitted themselves with credit. In the immediate *entourage* were the Princess Vicovaro,

whose husband was a member of the Cenci family, and who came herself from the Lorillard Spencer family of New York; and the Princess Brancaccio, *née* Miss Hickson Field of New York. And among Margherita's intimate friends was the Countess Gionotti, who was Miss Kinney of New York, the wife of the prefect of the palace, who serves now in the same capacity under Victor Emmanuel, a handsome woman, whose soft grey hair of later years has added a new charm to her face, and whose home in the celebrated Palazzo Colonna, recently come into her possession, is stately, and at the same time unpretentious. The Princess Brancaccio had lived in Rome since her childhood, and she stepped naturally and simply into her place at court; she was always to me one of the sweetest and most generous-minded of women. But she became very much of a personage, her father having presented her with a big *palazzo*, and the wherewithal to sustain a princely position. She and her husband did a great deal to make horse racing the popular amusement it has become in monarchical Rome, their coach and four galloping through the streets to the Derby at the height of the spring season, carrying the leaders of society whose presence at the course proclaimed it the fashionable event even before royalty had appeared.

Queen Margherita was somewhat vain of her undeniable good looks, although the limbs were too short for the size of the head and figure, and she appeared well only when sitting down. Umberto's habit of neglecting his appearance was a trial to her, and when his

stiff, wiry hair, standing up straight over his head, had become very grey, she often tried to get him to dye it, sending into his dressing-room every dye upon the market. One day he had them all brought out, and shortly after her pet dog, a white Spitz, ran into her room perfectly black. The King followed, laughing at her dismay, and said, "You see, Margherita, I would look just as ridiculous."

The most interesting man of Umberto's *entourage* was his famous Prime Minister, Crispi, who was responsible for Italy's union with Germany and Austria in the Triple Alliance, and for the marriage of the then heir-apparent, Victor Emmanuel, with the Princess Elena of Montenegro; and the most discussed woman of Margherita's court was Crispi's wife, Donna Lina, as she was called. Crispi had fought with Garibaldi and his army of the red shirt for an Italian republic, and his wife at that time had been like Garibaldi's Anita, donning the red shirt and fighting by his side. But when the monarchy came in and Crispi swore allegiance with his well-known declaration, "The monarchy unites us, the republic would divide us," he forgot to make another equally important declaration,—to legalise his marriage under the laws of the new government by registering it before the civil magistrates. It was an easy escape from matrimonial bonds which many men took advantage of, and among them was the Italian lawyer, then the husband of Donna Lina, a rosy-cheeked, buxom beauty with snapping black eyes, the daughter of the lodging-house keeper where Crispi

made his home. They were free to marry under the civil law, and they did. But it was not until Crispi became President of the Council of Ministers that Donna Lina was allowed to appear at court. She then requested a private audience of the Queen, and greeted her effusively with, "At last I have the honour of speaking to Your Majesty," to which Margherita replied stiffly, "I am too well aware of my duties as the wife of a constitutional sovereign to refuse to see the wife of the president of the council," and walked away. But Donna Lina had her revenge many times, as Crispi received the Order of the Annunciata, the highest in Italy, which was founded in 1362 by Amadeo VI of Savoy, called the "Green Count" from his costume. Members of the House of Savoy belong to it by right of birth, and the distinguished men upon whom it is bestowed are styled "cousins of the king," and have the right, which is shared by their wives, of sitting down in the sovereign's presence. At the court balls, Donna Lina could enter the Queen's private circle and make herself as obnoxious as she pleased—which she did, speedily and energetically. Any one who entertained the King had to invite Crispi and Crispi's wife with him, which created a hundred tragically humorous situations, one hostess declaring, "I have the blood of the old Roman emperors in my veins, and I will not receive this woman." But she did! Donna Lina's daughter was among the beauties of Italy, and the day before her marriage to Prince Lingualossa, which was cele-

brated in state, Crispi and Donna Lina received the sanction of the Church upon their own marriage.

Crispi was secretive and reticent and savagely sensitive regarding any implication against his public integrity, and he had almost nothing of personal charm, but I was proud to know him, and was always intensely impressed by his brutal strength of intelligence. On account of his part in the Triple Alliance, he was about the most hated man in France, but in Italy he was often spoken of as "the last of the patriots." The jealous Mazzini, however, dubbed him "the grave-digger of the House of Savoy," the cardinals, alarmed at his success in the establishment of the monarchy, called him "the Satan of the Italian drama," and my Roman friends of the aristocracy, shocked at my acknowledging an acquaintance with him, told me, "He is a good minister, but no gentleman."

I saw him at his home, "Villa Lina," at Naples, shortly before his death, when he rose with tottering steps from his invalid's chair to come to meet me, his grey lounge suit hanging loosely over his large frame, and dark glasses shielding the eyes, his white hair heavy upon the singularly shaped head—but the face that of an old, old man, old even for one of eighty, who is still able to live. His study was in disorder, as he had left it forever; the inkstand was empty and dried up, and the photographs of his two best friends, Bismarck and Gladstone, always upon his desk, were covered with dust. Pompous liveried servants were all

over the place, but his wife was not at home. His library, covering one floor of the house, was about the only possession he had to bequeath to her—and she was already negotiating to sell his secret papers.

Crispi has often been compared to Bismarck, but the history of his career is more like that of the Italian painter Andrea del Sarto, the artist who could paint no Madonna without picturing the same sensuous face of the woman to whom he clung in helpless infatuation as she dragged him down and further down, until he forgot his country, his honour, his friends; the woman who betrayed him, who robbed him, and who left him to die, as he had lived chiefly for her sake—alone.

The German statesman, von Bülow, as a young diplomatic secretary at Rome, extremely handsome, with a patrician manner and bearing, and a passionate love for music that made him one of the most sought after men in society, played much the same rôle in obtaining his wife, the Italian Princess Maria Camporeale, as Crispi did for Donna Lina. The princess, when scarcely more than a child, had been married off by her parents to Count Charles von Doenhoff, old enough to be her grandfather, but rich; she was lovely in person, and one of the best amateur musicians in Rome; and she and Bülow, singing and playing together, soon conceived for each other the most genuine, sympathetic, and permanent attachment, a *grande passion* such as only rare souls are capable of appreciating. They recognised it as such, declared it openly, and left Rome together, without any attempt at secrecy, to force the

husband to divorce her. Few people at the puritanical German courts of those days would have given much for Bülow's chances of advancement. But his father, the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Prussia, was in a position to protect him, and his talents were such as to make his retirement a grave diplomatic blunder, while the years of unquestionable fidelity and devotion between him and his wife atoned for much. They led a congenial, irreproachable life, singing and playing together, that being the relaxation in which Bülow finds even to-day the most pleasure, and one was seldom seen in public without the other. He went back to Rome in 1893 as German ambassador, and both he and Madame Bülow were received with open arms by the most exclusive set in society. Since his retirement, they have returned to Rome to live, having bought the famous Villa Malta, at the head of the Via Capo le Case, which once belonged to King Louis of Bavaria, and which stands in the midst of a garden of several acres of roses. Princess Bülow's mother, Donna Laura Minghetti, now the widow of her second husband, the Italian Premier, retains much of the extraordinary beauty and wit which made her Roman *salon* celebrated throughout Europe; and upon her eightieth birthday she attended a dinner party *en décolleté*, which disclosed the finest shoulders in the room. It is said in Rome that she has received the homage of every great man in Europe—possibly a slight exaggeration!

Crispi made many efforts to arrange a marriage between Victor Emmanuel and a princess of Germany

or of England. But they declined the honour of assuming responsibility in Italy's precarious position, and the heir-apparent was allowed to make the love match of his own choosing against the wishes of his family. But Crispi advocated it—although Rudini was the Premier in office when it was consummated—because the Montenegrin princess was a Catholic, although of the Greek church, and not of the Roman, and therefore without entanglement with the Vatican, and because she was so healthy, coming from a family free from any taint of scrofula, the curse of all the old royal houses. I remember very well when Elena made her first appearance at the Roman court, walking into the concert room of the Quirinal as if she were in a dream. The daughter of an untutored ruler in a small mountain state in the Balkans, who dispenses justice at the open door of his house among his rude shepherd subjects, she had been married for love and nothing else, and to a man who would one day make her a queen. How many queens in all history have held such a cup to their lips! But her striking brunette beauty and shy, diffident manner had the refreshing appeal of a sweet mountain rose, and looking at the bridegroom's anæmic, expressionless face and stunted figure, one could not help but feel that he and not she had made the better bargain. King Umberto was enough of an authority on female loveliness openly to admire her, and the men of his family, the Duke d'Aosta, the second heir to the throne, and his brothers, the Duke d'Abruzzi and the Count de Turin, gave her a gallant deference with the



The German statesman, Prince von Bülow, who since his retirement has gone to Rome to live, having found his wife there under romantic circumstances

friendliest appreciation. Queen Margherita received her with a certain dignified graciousness, but no cordiality, and the Bourbon princess, the Duchess d'Aosta, with something like open contempt, speaking of her in private as the "shepherdess." Her lack of *savoir faire* was somewhat inexplicable, as she had been educated in Russia in the family of Alexander III, her sister having become the wife of the Russian Grand Duke Peter. But she has never been able to assume the regal air. Shortly after her marriage, the bridegroom took her to Naples, and they attended a gala performance at the opera. The mayor of the city entered the royal box to pay his respects, and Elena rose from her seat to return his bow, an act of gentle kindliness, but too much of a condescension, so her husband thought, pulling her down with a mighty pull that nearly upset her, chair and all.

In Montenegro the women are almost the slaves of the men, the popular proverb being, "My wife is my mule," and Elena's father had given her as a wedding present a decree of protection for the peasant women of his country. It was a sentimental offering of love, but not of much material benefit to a royal bride; the Czar, however, had offered her a dowry of a million roubles (half a million dollars), and the bridegroom's refusal to allow her to receive it was much applauded at the time. When her husband offered her a present after the birth of her first child, the little Yolanda, who was so unwelcome to the nation praying for an heir, she established the "Yolanda

School" in Montenegro, which the peasant girls reach from all parts of the mountains, coming down in their picturesque dress and bare feet, learning to cook and sew, to embroider and weave the multi-coloured rugs of the Orient, by which they can earn their daily bread.

But Elena has conquered her haughty enemies with the one weapon she brought unheralded to meet the intricate difficulties of her position. It was love, and it has given her such happiness in her home that the women who were contemptuous are now envious in looking upon what so few of them possess themselves in this fair, lax-living Italy, faithful husbands and domestic joys that endure. Elena is in constant terror that her husband will have the same fate as his father, and several times when he has been late in returning from an engagement, he has found her in convulsions of hysteria, convinced that he had been killed. The King shares the same fear of assassination, and since he was a young boy he has instructed the men in his suite to keep close behind, saying, "If I must be stabbed, don't let it be in the back." It is a terrible shadow over any home, but most women would prefer it to the prolonged desire that death would bring the release their church denied them from an unfaithful husband they had learned to abhor—which is the position of thousands in Italy.

Queen Elena was almost the first to take succour to the frenzied, desperate survivors at Messina; and I always like to remember her there, in her cotton dress and nurse's apron, undisturbed when a maniac clutched

her as she passed by, putting her hands behind her when the commander of the American relief vessel was presented, because they were covered with blood from the wounds she had been dressing—a heroine of the century, to be placed beside the good Queen Eleanor of England, the wife of Edward the First, who saved his life by sucking the poisoned blood from his side as he lay dying upon the battlefield.

Every spring morning, about ten o'clock, the King's motor car can be seen at the Villa Margherita, which stands in the new quarter of the town, and the highest, at the top of the Via Veneto; the royal bugle call announces his entrance, and he and his mother sit out upon the flower-screened balconies back in the seclusion of the gardens, the city descending downwards from the hills in every direction. About the same time, Queen Elena, in a short skirt and blouse, comes into the Quirinal gardens—protected from the public gaze by high stone walls—with her children and their English nurse, and plays about with them in the sunshine. She has a little automobile which she runs about the garden, and generally without accident, although, when she was learning to use it, the King being upon the seat with her, she ran it up against a big tree and nearly killed them both. Sometimes the nurse reads to the children in English, and then the mother brings out her embroidery frame and sits with them. Each one of the four children has an outfit of embroidered bed linen and coverlets which she has made, the royal monogram in heavy white satin, with the dove of peace

hovering near the crown. She has a small kitchen in her apartments, and sometimes cooks Montenegrin dishes for them, and she has written a charming little poem for her children, which was published privately, dealing with a child's questions about the mysteries of life. Indoors she generally has a pair of scissors close by to amuse herself and the children by cutting out designs from paper—often handing them around to her ladies-in-waiting.

When the warm days of the early summer come, the children go every afternoon to the Villa Savoie, the King's country residence near Rome, and often to the Castel Porziano by the sea, a drive of fifteen miles from Rome, where the King hunts for wild boar in the forest. He owns also the romantic Island of Monte Cristo in the Bay of Tuscany, where there is a little house among the rocks, and large stretches of land for agricultural experiments, and he takes his family when he goes there for a few days' visit without a suite. And when the family go to Raconigi, near Turin, in July, the ancestral home of the House of Savoy, they lead the simplest life imaginable, with not even a lady-in-waiting for the Queen, and as few servants as possible. They used to be fond of their villa near the sea at San Rossare, just out of Pisa, where the Queen could indulge in her favourite sport of fishing for eels; but Turin is full of socialists, and their newspapers boldly advocate an Italian republic—so the royal family go to San Rossare no more. And they never go to the royal palace near Milan, the scene of Umberto's assassina-

tion, and not often to Venice, but early in the autumn they go from Raconigi to their little country villa, Santo Anna Valdieri, in the Italian Alps, then to Casserta, between Rome and Naples, the most beautiful of all the royal palaces, with a magnificent park and a large house famous for its marble staircase. But not until they are back again in Rome for the winter do they bother themselves with a suite. They never pay visits to their subjects either in town or country, on account of the fear of assassination at an unguarded moment, it is supposed; and the last time the Italian sovereigns appeared in this way was when the German Kaiser was in Rome for the silver wedding anniversary of King Umberto and Queen Margherita, in 1893, and Prince Doria opened his historical palace in the Corso in honour of the event.

The King welcomes any excuse which frees him from the necessity of giving the state dinners and balls, and a pretext is frequently found—the depleted condition of the treasury being always a *raison d'être* for official economy. These functions, when they are given, are primarily for the officials and politicians, and are extremely unpretentious and unconventional, compared to those at the other capitals of Europe. But the court season is eagerly welcomed in monarchical society, because it gives to the women who have the *entrée* the satisfaction of publicly proclaiming the fact. Rome has become the garden of rehabilitation for the *déclassée grandes dames* of the world, who have only to advertise their ardent sympathy for the Pope and a real or

imaginary friendship with one of the cardinals, to exculpate themselves for not being received by the King and Queen—and then make their way into the innermost recesses of the fashionable fold, where they find numerous congenial spirits with the same history as their own. But they seem unable to face the situation with equal glib plausibility when the actual invitations appear from the Quirinal, and court costumes are being discussed—generally preferring to pass that particular winter upon the Riviera or in their beloved Paris.

The season at the Quirinal begins on New Year's Day with an afternoon reception for the dignitaries of Italian official life, followed by a dinner in the evening for them. The next evening, the members of the diplomatic corps and their wives call to pay their respects, and some time during the month there is the diplomatic dinner for the *chefs de mission* and their wives. A daughter in charge of her father's house cannot take her mother's place at the Italian court, as at Washington, where a furious tempest in a teapot raged a few years ago when Count Cassini became dean of the *corps diplomatique*, and his adopted daughter of sixteen took precedence of all the women of the corps. The Queen takes a personal interest in these diplomatic dinners, and sees to it that the menu is entirely in Italian, and that only Italian wines are used, the five wine glasses at each place being decorated to represent a series of Italian hunting scenes. And she makes a point of wearing a gown with a *cachet* distinctively Italian. The table, generally decorated in roses, is laid in the throne-

room, and is often in the shape of a horseshoe, as this brings the guests closer together. The Queen sits opposite the King, and he sits with his face to the window which fronts the east, there being a superstition in the Catholic House of Savoy that the sovereign should sit looking toward the Holy Land. But in any room the King always places himself in view of the window—where he could see any would-be assassin who might creep in unawares. English has of late years become the popular language at the dinners, and any one revisiting the Quirinal after an absence of ten or fifteen years would be astonished at the progress English has made. The King speaks it perfectly, as his mother does also, but Queen Elena is not a linguist except in the Slav tongues. One of her greatest accomplishments is the mastery of the Russian language, and Alexander III often said he would be glad if he could speak it himself half as well.

Following the diplomatic dinner comes the one given in honour of the members of Parliament, and then those for the military and naval officers, to which are invited the foreign military and naval attachés. Later the King and Queen give a small official dinner for the court of Queen Margherita, who never appears at functions connected with her son's court, except it be a baptism; and then the Queen gives a state luncheon for the wives and widows of the high functionaries of state, in which are always included the widows of the men who have received the Order of the Annunciata.

The court balls begin early in the new year. The guests, arriving, fill the long *salle de garde* at the Quirinal, and upon the walls, where the firearms might have hung in the olden days, you see now some of the most gorgeous, glowing Florentine tapestries in existence, hundreds of years old, but still like paintings softened by the gentle, harmonising touch of a decade or two. This room is full of guests, with crowds of men, deputies and senators, perhaps, who have come without ladies, and stand watching the toilettes appear as long cloaks are laid aside. In the corridors leading into the ball-room, you pass through a long aisle made by lackeys in blue plush breeches and white stockings, and red coats trimmed with silver, all over six feet tall; a battalion of them commanded by several ushers with gold instead of silver braid upon their coats. They take your invitation card and give you a dance programme, a dainty souvenir generally in the shape of a silver book. Through a reception room hung with Gobelin tapestries, and furnished with rose brocade, you reach the ball-room.

Three immense Venetian glass chandeliers flood the room with soft light, bringing out the crimson shades of the hangings and the many hues of the fragrant flowers piled against the walls on gilded mantel shelves. The state chairs for the King and Queen are at one side, facing the windows, and there are several rows of benches for the women who do not care to dance. The adjoining rooms are crowded with the men who have come alone, and who therefore cannot enter the ball-



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The Crown Prince of Italy in officer's uniform

room before the ball opens, as the room is too small for many lookers-on.

I remember it as a splendid sight, Italian female loveliness being proverbial, and the women wearing exquisite costumes upon the few occasions when they have a chance to show them—there is no display at the opera and the races, as in London and Paris. There were hundreds of dashing army officers in gala attire, with spurs and clanking swords, and one of them, a young lieutenant, with all the fascination of the Italian military man, made his way over to me to entertain me until the King and Queen appeared. I had been spending some time in the Forum, and referred to a disputed historical question—but he regarded me with smiling eyes, clasping his hands in the favourite Italian gesture, as he lifted his shoulders: "Ah, madame, you forget our Roman sunshine and how dearly we Romans love it! There is no time for the Forum—it is years since I have been there—when the sun is shining and I can be out in it on the Pincian Hill or the Villa Borghese. Now, the Germans and the English, they have long, dark nights, and they stay indoors and read and grow wise. But we Romans—no!"

The uniforms of the diplomatic corps were striking, the English ambassador in red, the Chinese in flowing silken robes and tiny round hat, surmounted by a coloured glass ball like a plum, attended by his secretaries, whose rank was indicated by the size and shape of the ball; the Turkish ambassador, wearing his fez and a long black coat with the high collar, such as

Catherine de Medici made famous. Close to where I was standing I noticed a young girl in a striking costume exaggerated in style, her "pompadour" in front extravagantly high, the coil at the back extravagantly low, sitting, the centre of an admiring group, including her father and mother and an ambassador. I knew her to be an American, because no other girl could have held such a circle and dispensed her smiles with the poise of a queen. The ambassador, looking admiringly at her slender figure in a soft, clinging white robe, said with a bow, "Mademoiselle is a Botticelli maiden tonight." She swept him a curtsey in return and replied, with pretty impertinence, "Thank you for saying I look five hundred years old," which somewhat visibly disconcerted him, and made most of us who heard it rather gasp. But just then my friend, the lieutenant, approached her unexpectedly from behind, and instantly a delicate flush suffused her face. It proclaimed how much of a child the American girl queen really is, with all her aplomb—and her blushes are the unfurling of the flag where innocence and chastity dwell.

Count Gionotti, the prefect, appeared at the door leading from the private apartments, which was the signal for the appearance of the King and Queen. Two masters of ceremonies followed the prefect, and two gentlemen of the military household in full uniform, of course, came after. The orchestra, screened in a gallery high above every one's head, struck up the grand march as the sovereigns entered, the Queen, lovely and

beaming, her train, heavy with its weight of gold embroidery, held up by a master of ceremonies. The King was in military uniform, and wore the slender gold chain around his neck of the Order of the Annunciata, and on his coat was pinned the white cross of Malta and the silver star of the Order of St. Moritz.

In the days of Queen Margherita's *régime*, she opened the state balls with a royal quadrille, dancing with the dean of the diplomatic corps, or some member of her family. King Umberto was a soldier, and not a dancing man, and he never took part, but it was a graceful spectacle of movement and colour; the source of anxious hours to the palace officials, however, as something generally happened at the last moment to make a vacancy, and the number was so small of those eligible to participate. Neither the present King nor Queen dances, and now, as soon as they have entered, the ball is considered open. Between the dances they go about separately through the rooms, speaking informally and cordially to almost every one, especially the ladies, their frank kindliness giving the tone to the whole evening's pleasure, and dancing going on as merrily as in one's own private house—a unique experience to the visitor familiar with the etiquette surveillance of other courts.

After the balls come the afternoon teas at the Quirinal, including some twenty-five or thirty women at a time, who are on what is designated as the "private list" at the palace. The guests walk up a winding stairway graceful in its architectural lines, but not

imposing, or they can go up in the elevator, a sumptuous affair upholstered in red brocade, which is at this end of the building; and all find themselves in an anteroom, where there is a marble figure in the centre of a young Bacchante mother offering grapes to the rollicking baby in her arms, and where the maids are ready to take the wraps. Going into the drawing-room, they join a little party standing waiting for the Queen. It is called the "Salle Peri," from the artist who decorated it; with rich Gobelin tapestries hung upon the walls, and as window draperies, soft rugs on the floor, and slender gilt chairs and sofas of the Empire period, upholstered in tapestry. I remember it with two high Empire screens making cosy corners at one end and an immense Cloisonné vase, with another one of the same size in a curious Chinese design, holding palms spreading their branches up to the ceiling. Between the windows and underneath the mirrors were odorous flowers, where, at the top of the glass, the artist had entwined garlands of golden roses around the pictures of men and maidens painted there in the style of Watteau's festive scenes, altogether a delightful room, comfortably large, but small enough to be cosy.

When the Queen came in, and you could look at her closely, you could see in her eyes the reflection of a nature sweet, gentle, and good. She is taller than the average Italian, and the difference between her height and her husband's is a constant embarrassment. Her greetings are unaffected and sincere, and she is likely to spend the time talking about household affairs and

babies, the two topics of universal feminine interest the world over! At one tea she talked at length about cooking, the things she liked to eat, and how they were prepared. At another she singled out a tall girl and said, smiling, "Will Mademoiselle please stand up by me? I want to see which is the taller." The girl proved to be, and the Queen, delighted, exclaimed, "Well, I am happy to find one woman at court who is taller than myself."

As I came away from one of these teas, an official of the household, who was an old friend, happened to be in the palace, and he took me into the wing of the building where preparations were being made for a state dinner that night. He gave me a peep into the serving-room, full of dishes and champagne bottles packed in ice, scurrying waiters rushing in and out—and it was the old throne-room of Pope Pius IX!

VI

RUSSIA

NICHOLAS II AND HIS CORONATION

I WELL remember the first time I saw Nicholas II, as it was upon his coronation day. Along with the many other unofficial foreigners whom the prodigality of Russian hospitality made welcome, I went up to Moscow in May, 1896, taking a leisured route from Warsaw to follow the path of Napoleon I in 1812 through Vilna and Smolensk, and then on by slow accommodation train, which paused at midnight at the outskirts of Moscow, near the Sparrow Hills. The Kremlin, upon its acropolis, lay before us, as Napoleon and his marshals gazed upon it, a royal domain of palaces and churches isolated from the city proper by a fortified wall sixty feet high, and with domes of gold which gleamed out under the soft moonlight like the fairy roofs of an Aladdin's Land. But soldiers patrolled back and forth, visible even in the distance at midnight, and sentries, silently marching back and forth along a narrow beat, guarded every line that led up to it for hundreds of miles, upon every highroad and narrow footpath, on the south to Warsaw and to Kief, "the Jerusalem of Russia," to Vladimir and Nijni Novgorod



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The heir to the Russian Crown, the Czarewitch, feeding his pet sheep upon the Imperial Estate at Peterhof. A snapshot by his father the Czar

on the east, and clear to St. Petersburg on the west; and now they swarmed through our train with ferret eyes, to look the haughtiest unflinchingly in the face.

I had come to join some friends, an official at court and his wife, members of the ever increasing Russian colony of Paris, who think nothing of making the long journey back and forth every year, and whom I found had characteristically allowed their villa to be filled to overflowing with relatives and Russian acquaintances, arriving unannounced with huge trunks and bandboxes in preparation for the festivities. Our host and hostess were to go into the coronation church, called a cathedral, but holding not more than one hundred persons, who had to stand during the service, and including for this occasion only the special envoys, the ambassadors, and the imperial household. The rest of us had seats upon the diplomatic tribune erected in the open square just opposite the famous Red Stairs, from which the procession would start—where, upon the landing at the top, the czars of ancient days were accustomed to sit for the personal homage of their subjects, and where Napoleon, followed by his generals, marched proudly in to take possession of Moscow and, as he thought at the time, to add the throne of Russia to his other conquests. Upon the morning of Tuesday the 26th, we were in our places at 7:30, which had meant breakfast at six o'clock, and maids and valets in attendance at four. And, as the fashionable Russian is seldom abed before 3 A.M., most of the party

made sure of being up in time by not going to bed at all, beginning with an impromptu dance at midnight, and sitting at the card tables an hour or two later, changing then one festive garment for another. Inside the Kremlin, we found ourselves in company with at least ten thousand spectators who had left their carriages at the gates and, holding up the coveted admission tickets, had been divided off from the surging crowds extending in dark masses beyond the city to the fields of the Devitché Monastery, where the populace is always feasted after the coronation.

As the ticket holders appeared at the passage leading up to the tribunes, they were met by graceful young masters of ceremonies in white and gold costumes and cocked hats with waving plumes, who directed their progress by ebony wands tied with ribbons, and spoke the traveller's own language, whatever it happened to be, with perfect ease. From our elevated position we could look down upon every detail of movement within the Kremlin and out upon the hilltops beyond it, alive with people, even to the mansions upon the Sparrow Hills, turning their spy-glasses in our direction. In our enclosure the red-coated Cossacks of the Don were ranged along the sides of the square, a solid phalanx that stood motionless and silent during the whole morning; and the royal path to the coronation church, marked by red velvet carpet, was lined on either side by the Imperial Guard, the tallest and handsomest men in the army, wearing high boots and gilded helmets surmounted by the double imperial eagle, and embroidered

scarlet cuirasses over their white uniforms. One corner of the square was filled with the platform for the scarlet trumpeters and the enormous trumpets shining in the sun like burnished gold; and already the choir boys, in robes of scarlet and black, were gathering at the doors of the coronation cathedral, and the two other cathedrals of the Kremlin, the Church of the Archangel and the Church of the Annunciation. The sky was in an amethyst haze of full-blown spring and beautifully bright, making our position in the open one of security, and as the heat advanced toward midday, the *décollétage* of the women, a court regulation, became increasingly comfortable, although increasingly incongruous. The glare of the sun was almost blinding, beating down upon the nineteen gilded domes of the cathedrals, their walls in fresh coats of white, and the white bell towers, and upon the palace walls, newly painted in red. There were thousands upon the other tribunes of the square, and thousands upon the ground at our feet, men and women from every country on earth, it appeared, and of every national costume of Muscovy and its conquered nations. As we waited for the Czar, I studied the people of All the Russias—Laplanders from the Arctic Ocean and the White Sea, Finns from Bothnia, and Germans from the Russian provinces of the Baltic; Greeks, Turks, and Armenians from Odessa and Sevastopol; Black Sea Cossacks, and Arabs from Bokhara, once the Athens of Central Asia; dwellers from ill-fated Poland, the kingdom of Georgia in the Caucasus, and the Tartar kingdom of Kazan, whose crowns are a

part of the imperial crown of Russia; wine merchants from Astrakhan on the Volga, "City of the Golden Horde;" Persians from the Russian petroleum fields of Baku, and mining magnates from the gold, malachite, and emerald mines of Siberia, belonging to Russia in Asia, which exceeds the whole area of Europe by two million square miles; East Indian traders, who were Russian subjects from Orenburg; Chinese from the desert steppes of Gobi and from Kiakhta, where Russia is merged into China; Tartar priests or lamas from Urga, the sacred city of the Mongols, and prosperous Tartar peasants from the Ural Mountains, where the traveller may see the marble obelisk facing upon one side Europe and upon the other Asia. And there seemed to be hundreds of men in bright coats and kaftans from Bulgaria, Servia, and Montenegro, whose rulers are nominal vassals of the Autocrat of the Russias.

At nine o'clock the diplomatic corps arrived, having left their carriages outside the enclosure, and the Czar's bodyguard, in striking uniform of blue trousers, silver helmets, and belted white tunics, made a path through the crowd for them to enter the church; a distinguished procession made up of men who were among the most highly representative of their nations, and whose breasts were covered with jewelled orders denoting long and honourable service. The secretaries and attachés were in our tribune, and the chiefs, as they passed us, doffed their plumed hats, and their wives, beautifully dressed and be-

jewelled in court costumes, bowed and smiled to repeated salutations, holding up their fans to shade the eyes from the terrific dazzling light, as the hot sun mercilessly beat down upon the gold domes and the white walls. They had scarcely passed before the three Popes of the Russian Church, the Metropolitans of Kief, Moscow, and St. Petersburg, robed in cloth of gold from head to foot, came from the church and stood like pillars of fire in the sun to receive the Dowager Czarina, who had descended the Red Stairs and was walking to the cathedral under the royal canopy or baldachino of cloth of gold, which had been used for her own coronation. Its gilded and carved posts, inlaid with jewels, were carried by pages, and, as it passed us, we could see where it was embroidered with the royal arms and the royal crest, and decorated with the royal plumes in orange, black, and white, twelve in number, to denote a dowager empress. The Kremlin bells were ringing out with thunderous peals, the bands had struck up the national anthem, and the people were shouting in a mighty volume that drowned every sound as she advanced, preceded by heralds, whose gigantic white plumes almost covered their cocked hats, and then by the uniformed gentlemen of her household; a little woman of lofty mien, whose face was full of the pride of ruling and the determination not to lay it down, her diamond crown, from which the hair fell unconfined, catching the sun in a thousand flashes of dazzling radiance, as she bowed right and left, her robes of golden tissue and ermine sweeping out behind her. At

the church door she kissed the cross held up to her, and disappeared within.

There was almost an hour of waiting, during which the Metropolitans, in their golden robes and high jewelled mitres, covered with magnificent gems worthy of an imperial crown, and followed by attendant clergy in jewelled vestments, came along the length of the royal path and sprinkled it with holy water, going then into the cathedrals and scattering it there. Finally, the Czar and Czarina came down the Red Stairs, their progress along the corridors within the palace itself proclaimed by a succession of cheers, answered outside by deafening shouts; and the trumpets and bands announced their appearance below as the big Ivan bell and all the chimes of the Kremlin rang out, and the hundreds of thousands of people beyond the walls joining in with tumultuous cheering, which must have been heard to the Sparrow Hills. They took up their position beneath the baldachino of cloth of gold like the Dowager Czarina's, but displaying sixteen plumes in the royal colours, and the procession moved on toward the church along an avenue of flashing sabres, the heralds, in short jackets emblazoned with the royal arms and big cavalier hats heavy with plumes, coming first; after them the *entourage* of grand dukes and princes, the generals-in-chief of the army and the admirals of the navy, and then the sovereigns, keeping step to the slow rhythm of the bands, and followed by a suite made up of all the grand duchesses, their long velvet trains encrusted with jewels, held aloft at each corner by

little pages in picturesque dress, and each one attended by the officials of her own household. The sovereigns were uncrowned and the Czarina wore not a single jewel, her hair severely parted in the middle, and falling down to her waist. Arriving at the church door, the Metropolitans sprinkled them with holy water, they kissed the cross, and slowly entered the church, filled with the small number privileged to see the actual coronation. The consecration within lasted fully an hour; its termination, upon which the Autocrat does the crowning for himself and for his consort, being indicated to us at eleven o'clock by the solemn tolling of the Kremlin bells and the firing of cannon salutes from without the walls—when the whole throng, filling the tribunes and encamped upon the ground below, rose as if by one simultaneous movement, and fell upon their knees, an extraordinary spectacle of devotion which alone would have made the morning memorable.

About half-past twelve the Dowager Czarina emerged from the church and was escorted back to the palace as the artillery saluted and the crowd huzzahed, and at one o'clock the sovereigns appeared again and took up their position under the baldachino, upon their heads the crowns just placed there, and the Czar carrying in one hand the imperial sceptre, and in the other the orb of empire, a flaming mass of rubies and diamonds, emeralds and sapphires. The procession made its way back to the palace, but going first into the outer court, where an enormous tribune had been erected for just this momentary view, and then into the

two other cathedrals of the Kremlin to pray at the altar. The Czar was deathly pale from his long fasting and the jewelled burden which he carried upon his head and in his hands and in the heavy robes of cloth of gold and ermine falling from his shoulders, and once or twice he faltered and seemed about to faint. But a grand duke upon either side quickly leaned over and supported his arms, and he passed safely within, to the thunderous waves of greeting from cannon, chiming of bells, and human throats that swept out and over the great city, the river, and the mountains for miles beyond.

We watched the guests from the church follow him up the Red Stairs into the palace, and in a few moments the three thrones carried in, the two for the new sovereigns, of ivory and gold, set with precious stones, and the Dowager Czarina's, the one presented by the Shah of Persia, set with two thousand rubies and one thousand diamonds, which is exhibited in the Treasury. Our tribune emptied slowly, and we ourselves followed into the palace, where my host took me for a peep into that famous apartment, the audience chamber of the ancient czars, used now only for the sovereign's coronation breakfast. It was filled with princes, priests, and ambassadors, and I saw the Czar being served by his nobles, each course brought up to him by the head of an old house which had, in generations past, fought to the death for the establishment of this privilege. But the gentlemen who were taking



Marble Entrance Hall, Vladimir Palace

the rôle were so unaccustomed to it that they were supported on either side by a footman, and we saw the Czar watching the progress of the soup with many an anxious look, as if in doubt that it would ever reach him. Among the priests were a dozen or more from the Orient, whose religious vows made it a sin for them to look upon the face of a woman; and it was amusing to watch them, as, whenever a lady approached, they deliberately turned their backs, not altogether an easy feat to accomplish, as they dared not present their backs to the Czar.

Our own breakfast came later in company with the diplomatic corps in the "Gold Court," just off the picture gallery, and I remember that the *doyen* of the corps, an ambassador with souvenirs of half a dozen kings, told me that the coronation of the Czar would remain the surpassing event of a lifetime; one could find it equalled only in history in the Roman Empire at its height, or Solomon in all his glory. Afterwards, the sovereigns made a tour of the principal rooms, and I saw more closely the magnificent crowns upon their heads, the Czar's resembling the dome-shaped patriarchal mitre, carrying upon its summit a cross in five great diamonds supported by a big uncut ruby which, together with the other jewels of the crown, are valued at half a million dollars, while the famous Orloff diamond surmounted the imperial sceptre, the largest of all the crown diamonds of Europe, formerly the eye of an idol in an Indian temple, and worth in itself over a

million dollars. The Czarina's crown was a mass of great diamonds perfectly matched; and I saw hundreds of jewelled *kokoschnicks*, or high court head-dresses, of the Russian women, fashioned entirely of big stones of exquisite water—it seemed impossible even to hope to see the like again!

The Czarina was easily the most beautiful woman to be seen, and many spoke of her as the artist's ideal of the queenly queen. But her loveliness had nothing of the vanity which seeks a public homage; it had rather the appealing gentleness which made her mother, under the happy freedom of English skies, the most beloved princess of her day; and to me she was more the type of the sheltered woman to be mated to a Brutus of lofty soul, to whom he could say, with a tenderness immortal beyond the centuries of any empire's span: "You are my true and honourable wife, as dear to me as are the ruddy drops that visit my sad heart." Her face upon her coronation day was charged with profound emotion—it has haunted me ever since. It was like the face of a martyr walking with measured steps to her funeral pyre.

And the man who was the centre of the gorgeous pictures, whose autocratic aloofness and sanctity of person were proclaimed by every possible accessory of pomp and sacred ceremonial, produced in himself no illusion of royalty such as may impress and thrill even the most democratic when face to face with a king who

is really kingly. His narrow forehead and receding chin, visible even behind the beard, spoke little of intelligence and nothing of power; while the insignificance of his small form was emphasised beside the tall men of his family, splendid-looking fellows, all over six feet.

VII

COURT LIFE IN ST. PETERSBURG

Moscow I had seen only at the coronation, when the throngs of travellers made it for the time being the most un-Russian of cities. But I shall never forget the winter afternoon I arrived in St. Petersburg. I knew my London, Paris, Berlin, and Rome, and looked upon myself as a seasoned European; yet in the first drive through the streets of the northern capital, I felt a million miles away from it all. The enormous padded coachman on the ambassador's sleigh, and the footman in the outlandish garb of the ancient Russian *chasseur*, with his hunting dagger dangling from his belt, proudly sported, both of them, the American colours in their cockades. But it only enhanced their strangeness. The domes and towers of the churches, overlaid with gold leaf or blue enamel, flashed out above the snow-enmantled city. Unfamiliar Slavonic letters were over the dingy little shops. Curious Asiatic types of men and women leisurely made their way on the Nevski Prospect, seemingly untouched by the intense cold, peasants in dirty sheepskins and high felt boots, army officers, stout and red of face, sauntering with a military swagger, their overcoats carelessly hanging half over the shoulders, saluting in an absent-minded way the inferiors who touched their caps. The tall Cossack strode

quickly by, his wonderfully inlaid silver sword clanking at his side. Other Cossacks were astride in the street, sitting their horses with the ease of the Red Indian, scowling under their astrakhan caps, as fearless as the Arab, as proud as Lucifer—and as cruel as Death. At every corner there was a gaunt beggar with tin cup held humbly out, condemned in this manner by the church to expiate a sin. Carriers leaving the shops to deliver goods, and customers going in to buy, paused upon the threshold to cross themselves before the *ikon*, or sacred picture, suspended in the building. Along the Nevski there were numerous *ikons* on view upon the street, and every one stopped before them in passing to cross himself, fine ladies and gentlemen in their carriages, the drosky driver, the men on top of the car whose long seat faced upon that side. A multitude of tiny sleighs glided noiselessly along close to the pavement, drawn by shaggy little Finnish ponies, looking like white bears as the snow settled upon their backs, the one small seat generally occupied by a couple clinging tightly to each other for safety as well as pleasure. Their drivers, the huge, greasy *ichvorsticks*, sullenly dodged the merciless whips of the private sleighs and *troikas*, giving them the middle of the road, as required by law. A *troika* sped ahead of us, bells jingling and snow flying from the hoofs of the three coal-black stallions, the centre one trotting with his head under the high arched collar, and the outside ones in a wild canter, the fat driver, his cap filled with peacock feathers, standing up to direct them. Pedestrians crossing the

street were likely to get the upraised whip, but it never descended upon the horses, the big, gentle Orloffs, taking the mad pace with an ease and grace that made me cry aloud with delight.

The young secretary from the embassy, who had come to the station, smiled at my enthusiasm and tucked the fur robe closer in. It was bordered with sable, the richest, softest, most costly fur in the world, and never in extreme caprice of fancy had I imagined having sable carriage robes. But I recalled that I had been told I should find life in St. Petersburg with a background of magnificence seen in no other place in Europe; and I knew that the American ambassadors there had been for a number of years men not only of distinguished talents, but connoisseurs in the art of princely living, possessed of wealth and willing to pour it out that the prestige of their great country might be fittingly maintained.

This was one of the fortunate times when our ambassador was able to be properly housed. He had taken his residence on a short lease from a member of the Russian nobility, who had had several disastrous seasons at Monte Carlo, paying an enormous rental, more than the official salary, and living in it in momentary anxiety of being turned out.

St. Petersburg was at the height of its season, and the Palace Quay, the fashionable afternoon promenade and driveway along the Neva, daily made a noble setting for an animated picture not to be excelled in any part of the globe. Upon one side extended the man-

sions of the aristocracy, all veritable palaces, although not allowed to be so called unless the home of a member of the imperial family, marked over the doorway by the double-headed black eagle. The Neva was frozen many feet deep in ice, a smooth white road clear out to Finland, while across upon the other side lay the grim-looking fortress which has hidden so many mysteries, and the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, surmounted by its golden spire, where the Romanoff czars lie buried. Peter the Great's equestrian statue, the charger reined in upon the brink of a rocky precipice, raised its granite height in the perspective, and close at hand was the big Winter Palace, the St. Petersburg home of the Czar. The Empress Mother was often seen going to and fro, attended by a lady-in-waiting, in a low Russian sleigh, drawn by clean-limbed black Orloffs, the huge-sided coachman in flowing beard and four-cornered crimson cap, the little gilt tassel dangling from the corner directly in front of his eyes, while upon the narrowest of footboards at the back, where the flying snow found frequent lodgment, hung a tall Cossack in livery of red and gold, the imperial eagle in black upon his cuffs and collar. The Emperor and Empress were sometimes out about three o'clock, their sleigh joining the multitude of others darting back and forth, richly caparisoned and piled with handsome furs, the police clearing the way, and the finely matched team racing ahead. The ambassadors and ministers turned out as an important social duty, the padded coachman wearing plumes in the colour of his master's country,

and wide yellow stripes across his back, and the *chasseur* in gaily coloured greatcoat, big buckled belt, and ferocious dagger; their splendid horses and appointments indicating their importance next to the sovereign, and making their appearance one of the sights of the city.

And among the smartest of the sleighs and *troikas* were those of the three American-born women so prominent in St. Petersburg society: Princess Serge Beloselski-Beloserski, the daughter of General Whittier of Boston; Baroness Hoenegen-Hüney, who was married at the American Legation when her father, Mr. Lathrop of Detroit, was the American minister to Russia; and the Princess Michael Cantacuzené-Speransky, the daughter of General Frederick D. Grant, whose aunt, Mrs. Potter Palmer, gave her a handsome *dot* upon her marriage. The most important of the three was the Princess Beloserski, as her father-in-law was a member of the Emperor's household, and the family itself long famous for its ambassadors and statesmen. But it is no less famous for its romantic marriages and for the prodigal hospitality which had made it bankrupt, although possessing a principality in northern Russia and mines of iron in the Ural Mountains. Prince Serge's mother was a sister of General Scobeleff, the hero of the Russian conquests in Turkestan, an extraordinary man, who rose from the peasantry to exalted military rank, and placed his relatives close to the throne. His other sister became the wife of the royal Duke of Leuchtenberg, and was accounted the loveliest

woman of her day in Russia. The Beloserski family mansion on the Palace Quay is now owned by the imperial family, and the young Prince Serge was, for his position, a poor man, who made a love match without a *dot.* Princess Serge was very popular, a tall, slender brunette, whose face was full of charm, if not actual beauty, and who had the additional charm of being not ashamed of having been born an American! Baroness Hüney also held a good position at court, as her husband, formerly a captain in the Guards, had become an equerry to the Emperor. His estates were upon the Baltic in German Russia, and he himself was a good-looking man of the German type, devoted to his well-dressed, vivacious wife, who was so popular during her father's *régime* that it is said she could have married any man in St. Petersburg.

The Count Speransky, whose female descendants merged their identity through marriage into the Bulgarian house of Cantacuzené, was the son of a priest who became a celebrated statesman under Alexander I, and the Cantacuzenés have also had their noted men. But it was interesting that the American princess was less indebted to any prestige her husband's family could give her than to her own distinguished ancestry as a grand-daughter of a President of the United States; the Russians, with their democratic reasoning, saying that only royalty could be considered superior. The dowager princess, the mother of Julia Grant's husband, I remember as a delicate Dresden-china little old lady of French birth, and very much *grande dame,* whose

salon was supposed to have some political influence, as it was the *rendezvous* of the diplomats who extolled the Franco-Russian alliance; as well as where one heard the latest French music and the latest gossip from Paris.

The American girls married to Russian diplomatic officers were, of course, not in St. Petersburg, although at this time there was a great deal being said about Madame Bakhmatieff, the daughter of General Beale of California, and the sister of Mrs. John R. McLean, her husband being, so rumour had it, designated ambassador in Washington to succeed Cassini. But the Russian Foreign Office preferred to send him as ambassador to Japan after the war, his long diplomatic experience in the East doubtless making him particularly valuable at the Mikado's court.

It was upon the Russian New Year, two weeks after the one in our calendar, that the season began. Every one in the diplomatic and official world, the army and the navy, presented their congratulations at the Winter Palace, the Russians at eleven o'clock, as the sovereigns passed through the state apartments to attend Mass in the palace chapel, and the foreigners at twelve o'clock, as the royal procession wended its way returning. The afternoon was the busiest one of the year, the ambassadors and secretaries taking separate carriages from their wives, and driving about in as much haste as dignity would permit, to write their names upon the callers' book at the palace of each member of the imperial family, and to call personally upon their own

colleagues. Etiquette required that it must all be done between two and six; and every one arrived home exhausted, just in time to dress for the first state ball. This was a general mustering of society, some four thousand people, whose equipages created intense excitement in the crowded streets near the Winter Palace, as their drivers made the rush in quick succession up to the entrance, and discharged their passengers as if shot from the mouth of a cannon, into the shelter of the protecting canvas. The big palace doors opened and shut almost as quickly, and the guests trooped up the marble stairs, where for three flights up the walls on both sides were lined with the huntsmen, grooms, and all the staff of the imperial hunt, in dark-blue or green kaftans, edged with gold lace, the jockeys in richly embroidered jackets, buckskin breeches, and topboots.

The St. Nicholas Hall, with its sixteen windows overlooking the Neva, and colossal sideboards laden with gold plate, upon which, according to one of the oldest Russian customs, bread and salt had been offered as homage to the sovereigns by different cities throughout the empire,—had its gold and white walls hung with garlands of fresh flowers; and it was flooded by thousands of electric lights, reproducing all the beauties of the ceiling decorations upon the polished inlaid floors. The St. George's Hall and the Concert Hall opened out upon it, and a large conservatory was transformed into an Italian garden, a single incandescent light from above shedding soft rays like moonlight through the tops of the palms and over splashing fountains and

marble statues. The Czar and Czarina made their *entrée* with much state, and opened the ball, changing partners three times during the polonaise promenade, and followed by a long line of splendidly dressed women and diplomats in white kneebreeches and gold-embroidered coats. Supper was spread at small tables of crescent shape, it being contrary to court etiquette for any guest to turn his back upon another, the Czarina upon the dais in the St. George's Hall, with several ambassadors ranking according to seniority in the corps. The tables in one hall were overshadowed by gigantic palms reaching almost to the ceiling of the two-story chamber; and in the other, a tall laurel tree issued from the centre of each table, and the party dined in charming seclusion beneath its branches.

Invitations to the other court balls followed immediately after, decreasing in size and increasing in importance, and any one's position could be easily ascertained by knowing which of these balls they attended.

The last ball, including some two or three hundred guests, was called the "Hermitage" ball, because the supper was laid in the long *salon* of the great gallery, the original "Pavilion" built for Catherine II, where she spent her evenings in conversation with the philosophers and famous artists attracted to her court from all the capitals of Europe—transformed to-day into an exquisite little ball-room of white marble with graceful galleries in gold trellis work, a floor inlaid with mosaic, a delicately murmuring fountain falling softly from one shell into another; and an enchanting view from the

windows, away from the glowing interior full of the movement and brilliancy of a ball out upon the ice-bound Neva. But it seemed almost a sacrilege to be occupied there, even with the most classic of entertainments, and the most epicurean of feasts, in the presence of the treasures upon the walls. The imperial gold plate was used, and everything was gold even to the tall vases holding the flowers and a tiny fountain in the centre of the Czarina's supper table upon the dais, throwing an exotic fragrance into the air. And the Czarina herself wore cloth of gold, the long train trimmed with sable and gold flowers, where, in the centre of each, there was a big jewel glowing. For a diadem she had selected the historical one of Catherine II, made up of several rows of enormous diamonds, alternating with rows of pear-shaped pearls set so lightly that they trembled at the slightest movement, and wore with it a wide *parure* of the same design in diamonds and pearls over the neck and shoulders, with the sleeves caught up by diamond and pearl *agrafes*. The ball was so small that, when she entered, every one could see her well, and there was a hushed exclamation, "The Empress!" She was a picture which, with the sad expression upon her gentle face, made her look like a Byzantine Madonna come down from among the jewelled *ikons* of a cathedral. The maids-of-honour gave vivacity to the background, dressed all alike in ruby velvet with a miniature of the Empress, encircled with diamonds, upon their shoulders, and with veils of soft tulle falling from the hair down upon the trains, look-

ing like rosy clouds as the light caught and blended them.

Military men abounded, the Hussars in green, the Lancers in scarlet, the Cossacks in red and silver, and the Imperial Guard in white. The Czar wore the uniform of a colonel of the Uhlan regiment of the Lancers, with topboots, trousers of light-blue, and a short coat of darker blue, cut away in front to disclose the scarlet waistcoat, and with gold epaulettes and a light cavalry sabre. He walked about during the supper, attended by a master of ceremonies, following the ancient imperial custom of the host who must look to the comfort of his guests; a slender, mild figure, low-voiced and sad-eyed, the solemnity dispelled, however, whenever he smiled. He has dispensed with the bodyguard, which used to follow his father upon such occasions, and excited the liveliest attention among newcomers, consisting of immense negroes as handsomely formed as could be obtained, and as black as were ever born, usually dressed in loose red trousers and bright cashmere shawls draped about their huge bodies. As they never did any work, they were not supposed to be overly popular with the palace servants, and one night, when they were costumed in dazzling white, and naturally made a sensation, an envious servant who was passing with the fish sauce for the supper, pretended to slip, and then spilt the contents of his dish completely over one of them.

Nicholas, in going from one room to another, created excitement and general unrest, however, for as soon

as he approached a table, every one had to stand and enter into conversation if he intimated his desire to talk; the guests had to keep their eyes open to watch for his approach, and the servants, never knowing exactly where he was, were in constant terror of knocking into him. He would sometimes exchange a few words of greeting, and the courtiers would carefully impress upon you that his wonderful memory never allowed him ever to forget the name and the nationality of a returning guest. But a diplomatic friend of mine, at one of these balls, was once favoured by the imperial notice. "You have just arrived, I believe," said His Majesty; "how do you like St. Petersburg?" "I like it very much, sire, but—I have been here for ten years!" confessed the diplomat.

This little familiarity of speaking to people at the balls is, however, about the only one the Czar indulges in outside his own family. Nicholas I visited his ministers, his friends, and the ambassadors at their own homes for ceremonial entertainments, and without warning, for small friendly gatherings, especially if there was to be a musical programme that interested him—the servant at the door giving three rings to the house bell to warn the hostess of his arrival. King Edward and the Kaiser have both followed the same custom—an honour not without embarrassment to the hostess, it might be mentioned.

But to Nicholas II all such pleasures are unknown. There are no state dinners in St. Petersburg, as at the other European courts, to which the ambassadors are

invited. They see very little of him, in fact his isolation is almost complete. The American ambassador whom he has most liked personally was in St. Petersburg for several years, but never dined with the sovereign. When he took the long journey to the Crimea to present his letters of recall, the Czar having gone there after the season, the ambassador was invited to lunch—an unusual honour much commented on in the diplomatic corps.

Many blame the Czarina for the Czar's isolation. But the Czarina is not to blame. It was at one of the state balls, brilliant and magnificent in its prodigal display, a symbol of what vast wealth and limitless power could call forth, that an incident occurred which made us all remember the hissing, hideous serpent of revolution and anarchy coiled in the innermost recesses of the political life, a menace and a terror to the imperial family. All the guests were gathered, standing in complete silence as the doors were thrown open for the entrance of the sovereigns. Just as they stepped across the threshold, there was distinctly heard in the hushed room a sharp, unexpected *click-click*. It was only the electric light as an extra battery was turned on; but the Empress uttered a cry, and the Emperor staggered and turned deadly pale, while a moment of agonising fear held the roomful of guests.

And yet a high Russian official said to me an hour later: "There is no such a thing as public sentiment in Russia. Public opinion throughout the Empire is controlled by less than four thousand people, three-

fourths of whom are in this room to-night!" However, at the Hôtel d'Europe, when I was calling on some friends, an inoffensive old lady from Boston, with two débutante nieces, my attention was caught by a curious apparition in the wall near the ceiling—a small piece about two inches square silently vanished, and a human eye took its place. Meeting my frightened, startled gaze, it was gone in a flash, and the wall remained intact.

The season, as far as court ceremonials go, is very limited, but I happened to be there at the time of an extra fête, the baptism of one of the four daughters of the Czar, whose arrival created such indescribable agitation in a nation clamouring for a boy. The christening, however, which came within the regulation time of the following fortnight, was attended with all possible éclat, and was a miniature coronation pageant. When, with some Russian friends, I joined the crowds going out to the country palace at Peterhof to see the arrival of the official guests at the church, the whole city of St. Petersburg seemed emptied into its village streets, and the road between was a long procession of vehicles. The imperial family were conveyed to the church in gilded state coaches, each drawn by six horses and attended by Hussars and Cossacks; the tiny grand duchess, in a special coach with white horses, resting in blissful ignorance of passing events upon a pillow of cloth of gold, in charge of the Princess Galitzin, the Mistress of the Robes. For an hour or more there was

a stream of men in brilliant uniforms and women in all the splendour of court costume; then the Emperor arrived and escorted his mother into the chapel. But the rules of the Russian Church forbid the presence of either parent during the actual ceremony, so he retired while the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg immersed the child. Then, while the cannon boomed all the way from Peterhof back to the capital, the Emperor returned to the church for Mass—after which the Dowager Empress carried her small grand-daughter up to the altar and decorated her with the grand cordon of the Order of St. Catherine. It is the highest to which a Russian woman may aspire, and generally obtained in its lower order when the girl is assuming the dignity of a tiara and the sweeping yards of a velvet court train. But her small Imperial Highness accepted the honour with serenity, and was vastly entertained by the pretty ribbon and sparkling order.

Afterwards the congregation in the chapel became the Emperor's guests at lunch in the palace, and then went up to the supposedly happy father to present their felicitations. His disappointment, nevertheless, was apparent, and he said to one of the ambassadors—with a hopeful smile—"We must try again!"

The winter season once launched, entertaining went on with a verve typical of the Russian passion for pleasure. There were fêtes indoors and out, and fashionable people scarcely saw the daylight for weeks at a time during the six hours of the winter's sunshine, un-

til later on, when the long white nights descended upon the Land of the Midnight Sun, and we had to draw heavy curtains across the windows to darken the room when we went to bed. There was many a night drive to the "Islands," a merry party enveloped in furs packed into the *troika*, bells jingling and snow flying as we dashed over the lonely road, with dinner at the end at a big café, amid a blaze of light, perfume of flowers, and the wild music of a gipsy band. These gipsies had a way of rhyming your name into a verse which startled you with its weird effect until you learned about their trick of discovering it beforehand. There was skating to music in the short afternoon, and parties to the ice-hills at night—going like the wind down mountains of ice, the man sitting on the front of the tiny sleigh, and the woman kneeling behind, her hands tightly grasping his arms. Dancing was at its height at two or three o'clock in the morning, and card-playing as well, the stakes running high, borrowing going on promiscuously—and the women seldom paying back. Carloads of rare flowers, orchids, and immense roses came up every week from the Riviera to decorate the big houses thrown open, and we would come home from cotillions with our arms filled with favours of summer flowers. The dinner tables were laid with delicacies in fish, fowl, and fruit from every corner of the world, with fresh Russian caviare and the king of Russian fish, the *sterlet* of the Volga, so expensive as almost to be worth his weight in gold. A foreigner was often made acquainted with apples, peaches, and pears

bearing photographs of the imperial family, the picture laid on while the fruit was ripening, and producing a perfect silhouette—costing about one dollar each, but common enough upon a Russian table in the depths of the northern winter.

An invitation to dine, sent out at the opening of the season, frequently meant that one was expected every week upon the night indicated; one went if one could in an easy, familiar way, and the banquet was always spread. One knew that many of these prodigal hosts and hostesses were nearly bankrupt, that the peasants on their estates might be starving, and that the humble tradespeople were often not paid for years. But the splendid, radiant pictures were there, the sumptuous, sensuous life beckoned, the reckless generosity was irresistible in its appeal. Philosophy could be left for other, more barren hours.

Masterpieces from the celebrated dressmakers of Paris and Vienna set off the dark beauty of the Russian women, carried out in designs often extreme in their audacity, but worn with perfect *sang-froid*, in spite of the well-known sentiments of the Czarina. She showed her marked displeasure one night as two young matrons entered the ball-room together, dressed alike in filmy clinging black lace, the low *décolletée* held up by a narrow band of flashing diamonds across the snowy shoulders. But, after a momentary buzz of excitement at her frown, the gowns were the success of the evening.

Fortunes in rare furs, long cloaks, *shubas*, and mantles were piled high in the halls below, while up-



Dining room, Vladimir Palace, showing against the wall the plates of gold upon which, according to ancient Russian custom, bread and salt have been offered to the family as tokens of homage during journeys throughout the Empire

stairs, in the ball-room, the display of jewels was half barbaric. The men sometimes wore almost as many as the women, appearing in court dress with their breasts half covered with orders blazing with precious stones. In afternoon dress, you might see rubies and diamonds in their studs and cuff links, and they would likely offer cigarettes from a gold case strewn with the monograms of various friends traced in jewels, a popular Russian fashion. There were many stones unfamiliar elsewhere in Europe except to the connoisseur —the wonderful Siberian gems: the green nephrite, which is one of the heaviest stones in the world; the aquamarine, which is, what its name implies, a stone which mirrors the colours of the sea; the jacinth, reflecting the variegated tones of the hyacinth; the beryl and topaz in unusual shades of green, yellow, brown, and blue; the rose-coloured tourmaline, the chrysolite, with the delicate tints of the olive; and the rare alexandrite, which is emerald-green in the sun, but suffused with lilac or amethystine under the electric light.

But it was an American-born duchess who outdid even the Russians one season, making a tremendous sensation at a court ball so loaded down with her great tiara and high dog collar, her stomacher and ropes of famous pearls, that she rivalled even the Empress—to the embarrassment of the ambassador who presented her, and who realised what a serious breach of etiquette it was. It was some time afterwards that a jeweller in Paris, bursting with pride over the achievement, told me how he had gone to London to make imitations of

the celebrated jewels especially to be worn at this St. Petersburg ball, the duchess being afraid to take the genuine ones upon such a long journey up into the wild and barbarous North. The ruse was never suspected in St. Petersburg, because a great lady of Russia would seldom condescend to wear imitations, as is frequently done in England at court when all the world knows that the real gems exist. The Russian must have not only an enormous collection of stones, but they must be enormous in themselves; nothing small appeals to her bizarre fancy. After a ball at one of the embassies in St. Petersburg, a newly arrived secretary was about to throw into the waste-paper basket an emerald as big as a pigeon's egg. He thought from its size that it could not possibly be genuine—but the owner had a string of them a yard long.

Russian society, although the most exclusive in Europe as far as the sovereigns are concerned, is in itself the most democratic. Princes are as common as grasshoppers in Kansas—and, one might almost add, as unimportant. A foreigner who particularly wished to have such a high-sounding title upon his servant's roll, could undoubtedly secure it by the payment of a few extra roubles. The law of primogeniture does not exist; every son of a prince becomes himself a prince, and every daughter a princess, while the property is divided equally. The old families were the rulers of the nation from the time of Rurik up to Peter the Great, when the Russian proverb, *Le czar a ordonné*,

mais les boyards ont approuvé, was swept aside by Peter's ruthless hand. They were also rich, the nobles or *boyards*, as their serfs numbered up into the millions, and, being bound to the land, created a certain entail, which kept the land from being sold. But Alexander II, in giving freedom to the serfs, presented them also with the land upon which they lived, and the nobles quickly spent the money they received as compensation and seldom accumulated any more. Since then there has been a rapid multiplication of titles, and a rapid division and subdivision of property, until to-day there are comparatively few of the famous old names which carry with them any estates. The merchants are becoming the landed proprietors, and some of them have presented jewels to their wives which rival those of the Empress; but they still retain their identity with the village where their fathers lived as vassals, and therefore still count among the "peasants." There is no upper middle class in Russia; a family is either of the peasantry—although this term has now a very wide inclusion—or of the aristocracy. And at court no one has precedence according to inherited rank, only according to official position in the government. Any cabinet minister may take his peasant wife upon his arm, and present her to his sovereign, and she will share his position without demur—a striking difference from Austria, where the husband's distinction of ancestry or official achievement gives to his wife no privileges of the court which she does not have through her own birth.

Democracy is as striking a characteristic of the Russian aristocracy as is their extravagance. The foreigner must make the first call, but it would be difficult to find a Russian great lady outside the circle of the imperial family who would sit at home and arrogate to herself the privilege of receiving but not returning calls. An American girl once told me she had time to compose an epic poem during the chilly and ominous lapses in conversation while calling in London. I have often wondered what she would say after calling upon the Russian women, who are ready, at a moment's notice, to discuss in the friendliest way with any stranger the geography, literature, and art of any country in the world, and in its native language. They are not "princess," "countess," or even "madame," to one another but "Marie Vassilievna" (Marie, the daughter of William), "Natalea Ivanovna" (Natalie, the daughter of John), in the affectionate and familiar Russian style of address. A man may amuse himself all evening trying to discover the last name and the rank of his dinner partner, the introduction not having disclosed it. And also with the woman, as the man is known in the same way, as "Michael Ivanovitch" (Michael, the son of John), "Serge Nicholaievitch" (Serge, the son of Nicholas), etc.

The houses are open all day and all night for calling, and you cannot merely leave cards and pass on, as in other countries. If your friend is not at home, some one else is sure to be, and you will be received. You seat yourself, upon arrival, in the great hall, and the

footman becomes a clever lady's-maid. He begins by taking off your big fur boots, then he unties the Orenburger shawl which envelops your head under your fur cap, and is tied behind, and then he frees you from your heavy *shuba* or long cape with high fur collar. The shawl and the *shuba* are *de rigueur*, and it is a dangerous experiment to try to wear a hat in the winter. You ascend the broad stairway, your toilette achieved, and pass through one, two, or three *salons*. In the last you find the family, mother, children, aunts, cousins, etc., etc., gathered around the tea table and the samovar. It may be twelve o'clock at night, but to all intents and purposes you have come for an afternoon call and a cup of tea. You sit for an hour or two talking with comparative strangers, taking your tea. The Russians are capable of drinking from ten to fifteen cups, the first with cream, perhaps, the next with jam or lemon, then with cognac, an endless variety. All the family matters are discussed and settled in your presence. You are treated as one of them. At last you retire at one or two o'clock in the morning, having spent a quiet evening and having had a glimpse of the warm-hearted Russian nature, childlike in its simplicity. It is in this respect a nature more approaching the American than any to be found elsewhere in Europe. And there are other surface characteristics of the two peoples which are identical, due to the same expanse over a vast stretch of territory and the imaginative temperament and passion for personal freedom it engenders.

"You have a saying, 'Time is money,' but if we had as much money as we have time, we would all be rich," was the way a Russian once wittily expressed to me the difference between his countrymen and the Americans. And, as to the women—as far as is the East removed from the West is the American, with her cool and calculating brain, seldom surcharged by any overpowering emotion even in the truest, purest love; and the Russian, who has the sensuous ardour of the Orient with the intellectual virility of the Occident, unrestrained by appreciation of the moral principle. It is a duality of the mating instinct which yearly gives to Russia several thousand children born among the most aristocratic in the land to mothers without the marriage ring. There is a public feeling of humanity which goes to the extreme of generosity and deals with the subject with infinite delicacy. Infanticide, among high and low, is considered the most hideously conceivable of crimes, and practically unknown. The government cherishes for the state its future servants and soldiers, appropriating the tax upon playing-cards, a million or two dollars a year, for the foundling hospitals of Catherine the Great at St. Petersburg and Moscow. Society itself is sympathetic and compassionate. And following the example of Napoleon I, who, during his occupation of Moscow, benevolently bequeathed to the foundling hospital his two children by Russian mothers, born after his departure, it has become no special disgrace for the Russian *seigneur* to do the same. The socially elect among the women, however, have the

friendly protection of secret lying-in wards, where no questions are asked, and where a woman of the nobility may have special comforts and special means of oblivion. The child may be claimed for ten years by whomsoever will present the little piece of pasteboard upon which is recorded its number—and nothing more. In St. Petersburg one hears it said that different women in society have such a piece of pasteboard hidden away among their private papers, or, perhaps, in their jewel boxes—where they can see it every time they are arrayed *en grande tenue* for the balls and the dinners they would have to relinquish by its open acknowledgment. But, after all, they carry the scandal with proud indifference, and may, perhaps, in middle life and deeper maternal craving, arrange to include the child among their own household as a footman or a lady's-maid, if the resemblance is not too startling and the husband enough *complaisant*.

In certain sets among the aristocracy, where the husband would no more go without invitation into his wife's boudoir than she would use his private entrance communicating direct to his apartment—one can imagine a meeting between a woman and a man whose mere passion had long since turned to dust and ashes in their mouths, covertly surveying with eyes of guilty fear and newly awakened parental love, a young girl or a stalwart youth, with form and features of unmistakable lineage and cultivation—a mirror of their own—but doomed forever to wear a servant's garb.

It is through this splendid, dissolute pageant of life that the Empress moves, a cold, silent, disapproving figure. The Czarina is without political influence, although this is due to her timidity and not to her lack of intelligence. But it has given *carte blanche* to her enemies, enemies so numerous and so malignant that they accused her of smuggling into the palace the baby boy who is now the heir-apparent, to replace the baby girl to whom, they said, she had really given birth. Half English, half German, and seemingly unable to interpret in the least the Russian character, so thoroughly Oriental at its depths, she has uselessly endeavoured to pattern her court after the ideas of her grandmother, Queen Victoria, a pattern, by the way, which even the English women would not accept. One of her first decrees was to forbid dancing and cigarette smoking among the women attending her Sunday receptions—when the Russian court has danced and smoked on Sunday for generations before Michael Romanoff was elected to the throne by the *boyards* and established the present line of czars. She also tried to abolish society gambling—when gambling has been from time immemorial the national vice. In every family mansion of importance there is a jewelled *ikon* as old almost as time itself, handed down from generation to generation, as the one possession too sacred to sell under any condition of poverty. But young men of the household in need of money to pay their gambling debts have often been known covertly to substitute imitation stones for the real; and I remember

that during my visit there was great rejoicing among some of my friends over the return of a prodigal son who had ruined himself and his father by gambling—which was later turned to grief and rage when it was discovered that, as he stooped to kiss the family *ikon* in token of repentance, he had cleverly extracted with his teeth the big diamond of the Madonna's crown—and staked it at his club in a game of cards.

Upon one or two occasions during the state balls the Czarina commanded carriages to be called for certain ladies whose costumes gave them the appearance of courtesans. And St. Petersburg has not yet forgotten how she dismissed from a ball the Grand Duke Paul, her husband's uncle, and the lady he had upon his arm, at that time the wife of Colonel Pistelcorps, but who appeared wearing the jewels of the grand duke's dead wife, the daughter of the King of Greece. It was in vain that Colonel Pistelcorps was summoned and declared that Madame Pistelcorps had received the jewels with his consent. The couple were ordered to leave at once. The grand duke, a handsome fellow, only a few years older than his august nephew, the Czar, and a man of a certain sense of honour, retained through a thousand escapades—and probably ten thousand temptations—considered that the publicity of the insult forced him to make reparation. He left not only the court, but the country, taking Madame Pistelcorps with him, and, after her husband had generously consented to divorce her, for a generous compensation, she became the grand duke's morganatic wife, with the Ba-

varian title of Countess Hohenfelsen, with a stately establishment in Paris and wealth to meet her fondest dreams. As she was the daughter of a railway engineer in extremely modest circumstances when she married her first husband, who had at that time no idea of inheriting the small fortune which later came to him from a distant relative and lifted him up into the society life of the army—it is probable that Madame Pistelcorps has many times been grateful to the excess of zeal manifested by Her Imperial Majesty, the Empress.

There are dozens of stories current in Russia of plots against the Czarina's life, the most authentic, the one concerned with the death of her little niece, the only child of her brother, the Grand Duke of Hesse, and his divorced wife, the daughter of the Duke of Edinburgh of England. The child was under the father's care for six months during the year, and he had taken her to St. Petersburg to visit her aunt, when she suddenly died in convulsions after eating a poisoned apple in the Czarina's boudoir, the largest and finest one upon the plate, and doubtless placed there for the Empress.

Among a people madly extravagant, she has Queen Victoria's weakness for petty economies, and has been known to order the St. Petersburg shops to send their newest designs in baby bonnets for her inspection, and then returned them after copying off the most charming of the patterns. She designs many of her most elaborate gowns, and has designed all the fur garments which fill three or four large rooms, and are worth a king's ransom in themselves; and the court jeweller

seldom has the privilege of planning her ornaments, a drawing from the Czarina's own hands being given with the order. She has a favourite set of aquamarines from her own design, a diadem and *devant de corsage*, with the stones set in the midst of leaves marked with diamonds, a beautiful and original pattern, of which any jeweller might be proud. But such small pleasures she probably arrogates to herself as innocent diversions, for her contributions to charity are generous enough. Her knowledge of money matters is certainly not extensive, as, speaking of a new American ambassador, she said to a woman of the court, "We hear he has an income of fifty million roubles [twenty-five million dollars] a year!"

She has followed the fad of the imperial family of presenting to one another jewelled Easter eggs containing inside some mechanical toy, but has never attempted to design any of them, one of the court jewellers being kept busy all the year in working out new and interesting ideas for them. Her own collection, especially those given to her by her husband, has been exhibited at different times to privileged people. Upon the Easter of his coronation year, the Czar gave her an egg of yellow enamel, the coronation colour, the jewelled diadem with which she was crowned reproduced in miniature at the top, while inside the egg was a perfect copy of the coronation carriage she used in making her state entry into Moscow, made of gold and red enamel, with red velvet seats, a beautifully hand-painted door to open and shut, and gold wheels to turn

around. In 1900, when the Siberian railroad was the important thing of the year, he gave her at Easter an egg of gold, encrusted with jewels, containing inside a whole set of railway carriages and engine, with the mechanism so complete that they were taken out and ran along the table. Another year the egg was decorated with roses formed of diamonds and lilies-of-the-valley in pearls, while a tiny spring hidden under a ruby brought out the miniatures of the Czar and the children; while at another year the egg was of rock crystal, surmounted by the imperial crown in diamonds and emeralds, and rested upon a pedestal of gold, which turned upon a pivot, bringing into view the photographs upon ivory of the numerous royal palaces showing through the crystal.

The interior of the Winter Palace is, in its daily routine, quite like a German settlement, as most of the servants are from the Czarina's home in Hesse, or from the German provinces of Russia upon the Baltic. But English is the language of the father and mother and children in the family circle, which is, by the way, as affectionate and intimate as one finds in humbler and happier walks of life. The mother is constantly with her children, and, upon the rare occasions when she receives an ambassador's wife, she passes directly into the audience room from her boudoir, and different ones among them have heard in retiring a tiny piping voice imploring, "Oh, please, mamma, I do want to see the lady." The "ambassadress" is sure to record her audience among the events of her life; but it is probably

more of an event for the Empress to see and talk directly with a woman from the far-off world of her girlhood days of freedom, and for a few moments to forget that she dare not taste of a single dish until a trusted servant has first examined it, and that among her own subjects she can detect so many averted, disloyal eyes.

Considering the complex character of the Russian women of the aristocracy, their versatility in accomplishments, and intelligence often profound, their complete mastery of the arts of fascination, and their dominance in political influence, it is extraordinary that the two women of the court who most accurately portray this Russian type, and are most powerful on that account, should both be foreign-born—the mother of the Czar, and the German wife of his uncle, the Grand Duke Vladimir. When the dainty Princess Dagmar of Denmark became Empress of All the Russias, no one thought of her except as a lighthearted, merry creature, with inexhaustible energy for gaiety, who could busy herself all morning with family affairs, skate all afternoon with the utmost enthusiasm, and arrive at a ball as fresh and sparkling as a girl—and dance all night. Her husband, Alexander III, once amused himself by seeing how long she would dance, so he dismissed the musicians slowly one by one, until only one was left, the Empress all the time dancing merrily away wholly unconscious of the flight of the hours—or the musicians. The state balls are always opened by the Polish Mazurka, so difficult that few except the natives of

Russia ever learn to do it well. But no one dances it even to-day to greater perfection than the Dowager Czarina; and to have seen her in the heydey of her beauty, dancing it with Prince Dolgoruki, the Master of Ceremonies, and the handsomest, most graceful man at court, taking the intricate steps with an exquisite abandon and skill, was a sight incomparably charming and duplicated nowhere else in Europe. As the young wife of Alexander III, she assumed her rôle with a natural dignity which was astonishing when one remembered her comparatively simple bringing up, as far as royalty was concerned. But her inner self, not known until after her husband's death, was a revelation. Still devoted to the pursuit of pleasure even in advancing years, she has been able to cope with the shrewdest political intriguers in Russia; she sees everything, knows everything, and is the one power always to be reckoned with. She is a woman of excellent mind, far superior in this respect to her sister Alexandra of England, but with more force of character than deep intelligence. She never dominated the masterful Alexander III, but her son has always been like putty in her hands, and whatever his political actions may be, it can safely be conjectured that they have received her approbation. She was undeniably a faithful wife, but she quickly assimilated the ideas of her husband's nation; she has never defended anything improper, simply conveniently declined to see it, and, with philosophical toleration, has never undertaken social reforms. She has never been sympathetic with her daughter-in-law, and the

young Czarina owes much of the difficulty of her position to her husband's mother—although the mother's political influence with the Czar could be easily swept aside if the wife would exert herself and form her own cabal, punishing her enemies and rewarding her friends. But as the older woman's power has grown, the younger has shrunk more closely within the narrow limits of her domestic life, timidly seeking to shield herself from the menacing storm.

In a short audience in St. Petersburg with the Dowager Empress one afternoon, sitting upon a high cushion, as is her custom, in order to make herself look taller, she talked with much intelligence about America. She frankly disapproved of American methods of rearing children; she thought they had too much liberty. "My sons were not allowed their separate residences until they married," she said. "I was advised to grant them each a separate home and their own *entourage* when they became of age, but I would not. They lived with me." Her voice, extremely musical, had a curious guttural timbre that one would always remember, and her eyes were soft and appealing—her son the Czar has inherited both. But I wondered if strength instead of weakness might not have been his with a different training, having more scope for independence and initiative.

At a dinner in St. Petersburg in honour of a visiting royal prince, the gentleman who sat next to the Grand Duchess Vladimir was tactless enough to remark, hold-

ing his champagne glass up to the light, "What is the matter with it, it doesn't sparkle?" The trouble was probably due to the *chef* having sent in an inferior wine, while charging his master for the best—but the hostess, hearing it, flushed with anger, whereupon the grand duchess, with inimitable tact, to save the situation, as well as coquetry, put her little finger into the glass and asked, "Now, have I made it all right?" Although a grandmother and now a widow, she is still beautiful, and one of the best shots in Europe, her gowns and jewels are celebrated, and the entertainments at her house are the most original and dashing of the season. They are so small and exclusive that they give a *cachet* second only to a formal acceptance by the Empress.

I remember what a sensation was caused when the grand duchess received Madame Witte, who had never been able to be received at court. Madame Witte is herself an extraordinary woman—that is to say, strikingly Russian—a Jewess of humble birth, who was familiarly known to the young men of the aristocracy as *La belle Matilde*, but whose natural intelligence was so great that she mastered several languages and mastered the intricate problems of Russian politics, until she gathered around her as confidential friends the most distinguished statesmen, and was supposed to know more cabinet secrets than any other woman in the country. M. de Witte's devotion to her lasted for many years, until, in middle life, the marriage took place, but when he announced it to the Czar, His Maj-



The Grand Duchess Vladimir in Russian Court Dress

esty said coldly, "The Empress and I offer you congratulations and regret that we shall not see Madame Witte at court." The Emperor's brother, however, the Grand Duke Michael, whose kind heart is often expressing itself in service to others, interested himself in the matter to such an extent that the Empress consented to receive Madame Witte's young lady daughter, whom Witte had formally adopted and informally acknowledged as his own—and who is now married into a family of the old aristocracy.

Witte was at that time at the zenith of his power, and when the Emperor, after a cabinet conference, said that the Empress would be pleased to see Mademoiselle Witte at the next court ball, the minister replied with a quiet dignity, which had its touch of hidden humour, "My daughter goes no place without her mother." But it was not long afterwards that some public funds under the control of the finance minister, Witte, were entrusted to the Grand Duke Vladimir, who found it convenient to use them to pay his gambling debts. There were a few days of suppressed agitation over his probable disgrace—and then the Vladimir palace was thrown open for an unusually brilliant and exclusive reception, where Madame de Witte was received with marked cordiality and adopted into the inner circle of the court!

The Vladimir palace is on the Palace Quay, overlooking the Neva, and was built when the grand duke brought his German bride to Russia. Going up the broad stairs of Italian marble, with a marble nymph

upon either side peeping from behind green foliage, and where long mirrors give you back your photograph framed in flowers, you pass some fine Gobelin tapestries at the top, and enter a spacious drawing-room. It is hung in rich red velvet and has a curious ceiling of oak, heavily encrusted with gold, and contains three large cabinets filled with the grand duchess' collection of jewelled flowers, the gold stems rising from tiny pots of rock crystal, the leaves formed of jade, and the petals of the roses, orchids, carnations, hyacinths, tulips, violets, etc., made of enamel laid upon gold with a ruby, a diamond, or an emerald at the heart of the flower. The family dining-room opens into the drawing-room where, upon the wall above the comfortable American fireplaces, there are a hundred or more plates of gold, upon which bread and salt have been offered as homage to the family in their journeys among the cities of the empire. And the walls are ornamented with a unique Russian design in gold, which is repeated upon the stamped leather of the furniture. In the different rooms there are rare collections of old Russian things, but the banquet hall is the only one entirely in the style of the country. There a porcelain stove reaches almost to the ceiling, elaborately painted in the half Eastern, half Western style of the Russian artists; the ceilings and walls are covered with variegated woods from the Russian forests; and there are large paintings of native scenes which are among the chief treasures of the house. But it is in the ball-room where the family have

won their social triumphs with numerous *bals masqués* organised by the bachelor son of the house, the Grand Duke Boris. The two ball-rooms are divided by a row of white marble pillars, and with the music-room connecting, all decorated in white and gold, with painted Cupids upon the ceiling carrying garlands of roses and delicate draperies trailing in soft clouds around the crystal chandeliers. In the private apartments, which are thrown open for a ball, there is a winter garden, where the family generally gather for afternoon tea, and various sitting-rooms opening one into the other, one, however, particularly charming, which, I remember, was hung in pink brocade and furnished *à la Pompadour*, and which the mistress of the palace used as her boudoir. There the inquisitive guest might find the latest books on bridge and poker, with volumes of Russian poetry, and novels in German, French, and Italian, and not far away the Lutheran chapel, built for her as a bride when she deliberately refused to enter the Russian church. Beyond the boudoir is a marble swimming-pool modelled after the celebrated ones at Peterhof where she takes a cold plunge every morning, and beyond that a studio, where she spends an hour or two every day.

But her most intimate room is the Moorish room of the palace, where the fantastic domed ceiling and walls, inlaid with red and blue, paled in interest before the great collection of royal photographs filling one whole corner of the room, nearly every royal personage of the time, but not as one would see them at court or in their

photographs sold in the shops—the Czar smiling like a boy, and the Kaiser, moustache and military swagger subdued, lounging in a careless attitude; the unhappy Queen of Portugal as gay as a girl; even the melancholy, timid Czarina radiant and animated, the grand duchess herself as a tiny little girl with her mother, in a quaint German dress, and a big hat in her hand.

At a fancy dress ball I remember seeing her for a few moments standing in the centre of this room, the thick fur of a white bearskin at her feet, with the ferocious mouth open and the terrible teeth hanging out, her luxuriant, regal figure clothed in the gorgeous blue robes of the native Russian costume, the gown and head-dress, *kakoschnick*, ablaze with jewels, and the long velvet train carpeting the floor behind her. She stood the personification of Russian femininity, enchanting in its touch of barbaric wildness and its tinge of Oriental voluptuousness—the strong face calculating, yet careless, showing a nature swept by the hot fires of the South, yet as cold as the North—one of the most remarkable women of her day, portraying a combination of contradictions best described—as most Russian.

VIII

A BEAR HUNT—A COUNTRY HOUSE VISIT

My bear hunt is one of the most interesting experiences of a lifetime—but it began in an opera box. I had been to dinner at a Russian house, in a lofty dining-room hung with paintings signed by names famous in Russia, but scarcely known beyond its borders, the doors and windows draped with the hand-wrought stuffs that come from Bokhara, and the butler and his assistant, flashing-eyed, low-browed Cossacks in their native dress, bagging scarlet trousers, high boots, and silver swords. Then we put on coats and fur mantles, shawls and carriage boots lined with fur, making ourselves unwieldy and unrecognisable in a dozen wrappings, were tucked into the sleighs so that we could scarcely move or breathe, and drove off to the opera. There two or three servants from the house awaited us, helped us out of the ponderous things, tied them up in sheets, and sat down upon the floor with them, in company with a crowd of others who were there for the same purpose, attending with Slav-like, dumb obedience until we should need them again. We had come to see Pushkin's opera, "Eugene Onegin," set to Tschaikowsky's melancholy music, and the imperial ballet in one of its most enchanting pantomimes. The

imperial box, which was close to ours, was occupied that evening by the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess Vladimir, and upon the front row in the body of the house were the six army officers acting as their escort, their son Boris among them, all in closely fitting red trousers and gold-braided coats, and looking as if they had tasted of every delight of life, the utter *ennui* upon their jaded faces making more of a tragedy than the one we saw depicted upon the stage. At the end of the first act, the grand duke rose in his box and disappeared, and the line of six were upon their feet in the same instant, their swords rattling and the jewelled rings upon their fingers gleaming, standing there straight and stiff, until he returned, when they dropped into their seats with an automatic movement, like puppets in a toy parade. The same thing happened at the end of the second act, and I was enjoying it with childish interest, when one of the men of our party, Count ——, a member of the Cabinet, whose distinction in statesmanship was as nothing in his own eyes compared to his record in big game shooting, begged to be excused. He had that morning received news of a bear in the forest some fifty miles away, and was starting for the hunt at midnight. In a second, forgetting everything but the momentous fact that a real bear hunt was suspended before my vision, I had seized his arm and begged to go. And although he had been bear-hunting from his seventeenth birthday until that time, which was close upon his seventieth, and had never before dreamed of the idea of taking a lady along, he suavely and cordially assented

without a moment's hesitation—as a Russian would smilingly do to oblige a feminine friend—even if it meant his immediate ruin!

There was an hour of hurried preparation in getting back to the hotel for a change of clothes, and, finding a native maid who was equal to the demands of the expedition, then a slow railway journey to the village nearest to where the bear had been seen. The count had telegraphed on ahead, and the station master's wife had a bedroom prepared, where I had a few hours' sleep, while the count made the arrangements outside, which consisted chiefly of sending word to all the men and boys of the village to be on hand in the morning. They came trooping into the station by the dozen as we were eating our improvised breakfast, and I remember the look of consternation which passed from face to face when I held up my coffee cup to drink to my friend's good luck, and the sudden exclamation of dismay from the hunter himself. To the superstitious Russian, it is the worst possible bad luck to wish a sportsman good luck just before starting out. The count wore a rough fur coat and stout boots, but had brought along his sable-lined overcoat for me, and some high fur boots, and quantities of white sheets, which he and the maid wound round and round me from top to toe, giving me two holes for my eyes and one for my nose. Then they deposited me in a low sledge filled with straw, which was drawn by two enormous Russian hounds, the count meanwhile putting on a loose white linen cloak over his fur, with a hood which concealed the face. As we

plunged into the depths of the snow-covered forest, we seemed a part of it, which was exactly the cunningly devised plan of the sportsman to hide us from the notice of the bear. The peasants were scattered about, roping in a wide area of a mile or two, to enclose the prey, the rope decorated with a multitude of tiny flaunting pennants in bright colours to catch his eye. Then they would go back to where he was sleeping in his *berlogi* or winter quarters, and raise a hue and cry to frighten him out. I was put up against a snow-laden tree, where a dozen bears would have passed me—as long as I stood perfectly still. This was the sole admonition of my friend, somewhat troubled at the last moment at the possibility of not returning me safely back to my hotel.

The men moved silently through the solemn, mysterious pine forest, flooded with sunlight and laden with the fragrance of absolute purity, while the king of game birds, the wide-winged capercailzie, took his flight with a soft *tok-tok* to say good-bye. For one swift moment I caught a glimpse of a streak of fleeing red fur, as a fox took his departure, leaving behind him a neat track imprinted in the snow, and the white flash of a disappearing hare, given his own snow-coloured protecting coat in winter, although in summer he is a ruddy brown. And a peasant, whispering, pointed out the track of an elk, one of the many who roam from forest to forest through Russia and Finland, their regal heads thrown back, with the soft eyes ever upon the alert, and the majestic horns outspread.

It was an age of suspense in the dead silence of the snow forest, before I heard the noise of the hue and cry in the far distance, continuing faintly, and then more distinctly, and coming nearer and nearer to where I stood, too excited to be frightened, but with a white-robed peasant crouching as protection behind me, his gun underneath his coat. Finally, "bang" went the count's rifle, from an angle where I could not see, then "bang" once more. Then the whole forest seemed suddenly to suspend its breath.

At last the great mangy beast came into view and stumbled past me, snorting and moaning and moving his head from side to side, but blindly, and seeing nothing. His track was marked by a thin line of blood, but when he dropped, it was into a pool of blood covering the snow like a crimson carpet, as he groaned and moaned in the anguish of his farewell to life. A crowd of peasants came running up and, after them, the count, but he understood my unspoken wish, and poor Bruin was allowed to die in peace. But a moment after they had surrounded him, with long sharp knives in their hands. It seemed but an instant after I had turned my head away, so as not to see what they were doing—they laid the skin at my feet.

And its glossy fur rests beneath my chair as I write these lines.

The St. Petersburg season, so brilliant and costly, is necessarily short. Upon these brief months of gaiety is spent everything that can be raked and scraped to-

gether, and then the family often retire to their country estate. Country house visiting is rare, and the Russians do not take the pride and interest in their country homes that the English have always done, and latterly the Americans. They prefer to know you and to be known from their life in town. But there they are cosmopolitan, with the language and social arts especially of the French, tabooing their own language as fit in talking only to the servants. It is in the country where one finds them really Russian.

It was in March, and the season in town had waned, although the grip of winter had not relaxed, when I found myself early one morning at a small station in the steppes after a night's journey. The country place of my friends, Prince and Princess ——, who were taking me home with them, lay nearly two hours away, but the *troika* stood ready, having been sent overnight. At the station there was plenty of hot tea, tea such as one gets only in Russia, and soon the horses started across the snow—snow in front, around, behind, snow covering the ground for miles and miles, a veritable wilderness of snow, snow! The horses seemed to pick their way by instinct, for the path was often obliterated, and soon we passed through a village where the cottages stood upon the snow; no trees, nothing but snow, snow. The curtains were drawn at the windows, and apparently all the cottagers were asleep. But suddenly there was a terrific din, and we were surrounded by an army of wild-looking dogs, which sprang yelling at the horses' noses, trying to bite them. They looked



Trophies of one of the Count's successful bear hunts. A peasant huntsman on guard

fierce enough to terrify any one, but the driver was as cool and collected as though he had only some playful puppies gambolling about him. He gave the reins of the plunging horses to the prince, and then, standing on the steps of the *troika*, threw out his knout, with its lash fifteen feet long, to drive off the dogs. They fell away, howling with pain, and we soon left them far behind. We raced through another village like the first, where the thatched roofs came down to about three feet from the ground, but the dogs did not molest us there, then over a frozen river, and so fast through the gates of the park that we had but a glimpse of the stone lions which guarded it. Then, faster than ever, up and down hill, fairly flying over the ground, and then to a stop, sudden and exciting, before the broad steps of the house. The servants were waiting for their master, who became in a moment the mediæval *boyard*, and, as he dismounted from the sleigh, they bent to kiss his hand as in the old days of serfdom.

Russian country houses are not old, as a rule, because they are generally built of wood, but this one dated from the time of Catherine the Great. She gave it to one of her brave—and amorous—generals, and his descendants, the present owners, had fitted it up in keeping with the period, essentially French. Marble steps led up to the terrace, where we entered through long glass doors into an immense hall, with countless small tables and settees. My bedroom was correspondingly large, you could have danced a cotillion in it. The

family coat-of-arms and the prince's monogram were painted in gold in the hall and above the entrance to many of the rooms, and they were upon every piece of china in the dining-room and upon every napkin. But they were most interesting, carved in the mantels above the big fireplaces, woven in the rugs upon the floors, or set in the beautiful stained-glass windows. The princess's bedroom was hung in rose brocade and furnished entirely in rose, with a toilet set of solid silver in antique Italian style, which was a gift from her father, a rich Moscow merchant, whose fortune had rehabilitated the prince's position and his family estate. She had ravishing dressing tables draped with rose silk and lighted by tall silver candelabra, and every conceivable article for the toilet. But the prince's plain bedroom was fitted up for a soldier, with swords hanging at the foot of the bed, and his sitting-room was filled with a collection of antique armour.

It was a quiet, unconventional visit, and each person followed his own sweet will. For several days I never saw the princess before twelve, although I knew she was up early, attending to her household duties, and had an hour or two in her studio, being devoted to art. But later she initiated me into the mysteries of Russian housekeeping, and showed me where, in the servants' quarters, the spinning and weaving were going on in preparation for the summer, and huge caldrons, where the "solid soup" was being prepared, of mutton and beef and hare, with many kinds of fragrant herbs boiled down, and cooled until solid enough to be cut with the

knife, and sealed up until needed in the months that followed.

In the afternoons we sometimes drove through the forest; silent and mysterious it was, and I was glad not to be alone, although the horses were as swift and sure as Arabs. The library was the *rendezvous* for the late afternoon, and there we had tea at five, English afternoon tea, with the difference of the samovar, instead of the steaming kettle, lemon for the tea, and sweets, candied peaches and pears and strawberries, every fruit almost in preserves, so rich and withal so pretty, that they seemed too good to eat. In the library, with its walls and ceiling of carved wood, we lounged or read in the midst of books in many languages, rare old manuscripts upon the shelves, and bronze figures of warriors, poets, and musicians, Catherine and her friend, the general, among them, looking coldly down upon us. To the left of the library lay the picture gallery, where Catherine figured again, resplendent in her imperial robes, and generations of family portraits hung quite as in an English ancestral hall. Glass doors opened out from the library upon a portico supported by marble columns, the steps took one down to the terrace, and beyond there was a tiny path along the river. And everywhere, snow, snow.

The prince and princess had no children at home, but we were a numerous family. The princess had a distant relative, a young widow, with her four children, who were poor, and who made their home upon the estate, with a suite of rooms in the big house, and every

consideration and comfort; and there was the prince's sister, who had been a teacher in St. Petersburg for thirty years—a rich and beautiful child when her father's serfs were freed, but now a broken-down schoolroom drudge. Then there was the old governess, whom the princess had had for her own children, and who was passing her fortieth year in the family circle, an old lady of eighty, to whom the princess always sent up an ample meal. Had the family been poor, she would still have been cared for, with the same expression one receives in the households of the poor aristocracy, where one finds the same boundless charity. "She is poor and old and helpless; what can I do but take her in?"

Strange faces often appeared at the table, Russian guests who came uninvited, but were welcome, relatives or friends or, perhaps, only mere acquaintances, passing that way, and unable to get lodging elsewhere. It was like a glimpse of the Middle Ages, when the modern hotel was undreamt of, and the wayfarer was refreshed at cottage and castle.

Dinner was at seven, a cosmopolitan meal, served with ceremony and with half a dozen servants in the room; but, before we took our places, we gathered in informal fashion around the buffet, where the *zakuska* of smoked herring, caviare sandwiches, pickled mushrooms, and *vodka* was served as an appetiser. At table we began with the soup, generally having with it a tiny hot scone filled with chopped meat, and the soup itself of cabbage, or of beets, when there would be a thick sour cream for it, which I ate politely in much the

same way that Becky Sharp ate the famous red pepper at Joseph Smedley's invitation. The Russian fowl was tender and toothsome with pickled cherries, and I remember the roast mutton, stuffed with buckwheat, and the cucumbers always on the table, carefully prepared for the winter use. There is a Russian proverb, "Everything is nothing compared to eternity, but eternity gives place to a salted cucumber."

At the end the children and gentlemen would all go up to the princess, kiss her hand, and thank her for the dinner in the gracious Russian fashion, and the very religious ones would cross themselves before leaving the table. And at ten o'clock there was tea again, with cold meat, cheese, and sweets in abundance, with the old governess—who came downstairs for the evening—to serve it and wash our cups and saucers of Dresden china in the samovar bowl without leaving her seat.

In the evenings the peasants, in their picturesque garb, would sometimes come timidly in and up to the master for certain favours or advice, and at eleven o'clock the table was always cleared for the inevitable game of cards, played lazily and amicably, with cigarettes lighted and discarded, one after another.

Indoors, in the daytime, one might imagine for a while that one was in Italy, France, even in England. The home life was that of people who have visited many countries, become acquainted with many national customs, and able to give any traveller a touch of his

native life, a breath from his native land. Out of doors one saw always the Russian peasant dress, and Russia was everywhere. But it was at night, as we lay in our spacious chambers, that we realised most that we were in the heart of the Russian country, for there the wild winter birds in the forest began their cries, and the forest itself, under the moonlight, gave forth pictures weird, even terrifying—ice and snow as far as the eye could reach—and did not that cry sound like a wolf—was not that sound the step of a bear? Then we heard the night watchman call out, and the answer of the master that all was well. Then we went to sleep. To dream of Russia? Ah, no! to dream of home scenes and home faces—to forget that we were in the wild Russian country.

IX

GERMANY

BERLIN AND THE COURT OF THE KAISER

In coming to Berlin from any part of Europe, one has for a while a bewildering feeling of insecurity in one's social moorings. One's French is not universally useful, every one at court is supposed to know German, and the language tabooed with contempt in St. Petersburg as fit only for business dealings with the men who have captured the country's banking and its commerce —comes to you in Berlin vibrant with the note of challenge, shrill and dominating, its amazing contortions and combinations of syllables, its turnings and twistings of the resounding r-r-rh rolling out like a pæan of conquest.

The religion *à la mode* of complaisance or scepticism of Paris, the cold, punctilious church-going of Rome and London, and its supercilious amusement at Nonconformist warmth, to which one becomes habituated with years, and accepts as a matter of course—it drops from you like a threadbare garment consumed in the flame of Luther's burning torch. How like part of another world it seems, when you take up your abode in one of the ultra-smart, exclusive little hospices of Berlin, where you have eloquent morning and evening

prayers, and count among your cards to dinner and to lunch weekly invitations to "come for hymns." It carries one back to the small towns of the far West, where the Methodist camp meetings are the *rendezvous* of society. You smilingly tolerate it in Berlin as a diversion and idiosyncrasy of race, but you soon discover that it is only one of many tokens of Teutonic virility and depth of thought which accepts a thousand restrictions of etiquette, but none of shams and surface things.

Your superficial chatter about books and people does not interest those serious-eyed Germans, fresh from their mental gymnastics with Kant and Hegel; your *bel esprit* falters and disappears before their ponderous questionings. But so also melts your English reserve before the masculinity towering above you in a giant's magnificence of physique, but looking down with the sentimental softness of a schoolboy. You are touched by the sacredness of the Teuton's *grande passion* for his music, even the frivolous *jeunesse dorée* possess this immortal gift; and the debauch of concerts which intoxicates and befuddles your foreigner's brain, the Berliner takes in unemotional potations night after night during the length of the long season, and emerges with his musical digestion unimpaired.

But after a few dinings out in the world of official life, all things of digestion appear possible to him, whether of the brain or the diaphragm. So you think, as you watch him making his vigorous, stolid attack upon monumental feasts that would stupefy with horror

a Parisian Sybarite, eating his way solemnly for three mortal hours through a dozen different courses with a dozen different wines—and a secret tip to the butler for champagne in his water glass. He rises unabased and unscathed, not even jocosely "mellow," escorts you steadily to the drawing-room door, kisses your hand with the *malzeit* of ceremony, and walks off to coffee, *liqueurs*, and cigars with the unconcern of everyday things.

In the circles about the court every one has his proper place, in a settled scheme of functions and functionaries as immutable as the laws of the Medes and the Persians; and the "Frau Privy Councillor" and the "Frau Staats Minister" complacently hold their humdrum sway unaffected by costume combinations of purple, pink, and emerald green, by *embonpoint* and the absence of a waist line, by such little things as loveliness of face and form, a pretty art in repartee, or brilliancy in hospitality. Smart, handsome young officers, *le dernier cri* of dandyism and conceit, pay perfunctory, funereal court, very evidently "by command," to femininity possessing neither youth nor beauty, the soft allurements of virtue, nor the enticing bewitchments of vice—but which is "Excellency"—all of this and nothing more!

I was young and unimportant when I first visited the Berlin court, and I remember that the weapons of womanly conquest—good looks, Parisian toilettes, intellectuality and spirituality, sympathetic and matured in charm—were all so useless for a *grand succès*, that

for a week I thought I should die of chagrin. But it was all so unutterably comic—with no one with the slightest glimpse of humour to see—that in the end I felt I must live to laugh.

The story of a court season is to-day the same as twenty years ago, in all its important things, in spite of the growth of the city into a durably built imitation of an ugly mushroom town, and its ceaseless striving for plutocratic power. The American ambassador is one day "master of his own front door," with a princely mansion for his dwelling, and the next day finds it sold over his head, the same as his colleagues throughout the world; and the Berlin wag has a chance to tell his old tale about the foreign gentleman arrested for loitering all night in the Tiergarten, and his plaintive reply to the policeman's threat, "Go home; I can't go home. I have no home. I am the American Ambassador."

The Kaiser grows a little greyer year by year, but otherwise he changes not, or, rather, is the same ever-changing, whether among his thousand different uniforms, his fifty different castles, his yachts, and his motor cars, or among the multiplied diversity of his accomplishments and his moods. His familiar figure on horseback in the Tiergarten comes and goes with the rising and the setting of the sun, his withered arm skilfully braced to deceive the multitude and hide his own bitter mortification. At court, now as always, he is attended by Count von Eulenburg—a distant relative of the central figure of the Eulenburg scandal—preceding him in the procession to the throne, his knee-

breeches, white silk stockings, dashing array of medals, and high Louis XVI wand of office, seeming to know nothing of the flight of time, as his tall, handsome figure shows nothing of the weight of his seventy years. And the Countess Brockdorff attends the Empress the same as when Augusta Victoria assumed the imperial robes. The Empress seldom appears any more on horseback, a loss in every spectacular military review, as she made a strikingly handsome appearance, sitting her steed like a Diana.

She has almost no social existence apart from her husband, except the little evening teas to which she invites a few old friends who are interested in her charities, or, perhaps, in mourning, and cannot therefore go to the *Schleppen Cour.* They congregate about nine o'clock in the *Louis Quatorze salon* of the Schloss, which is in gold and white brocaded hangings, and, after the Kaiser has finished his dinner, and she is at liberty, the Kaiserin comes in. The servants pass around tea and, later on, some wine; there may, perhaps, be a little music, and upon rare occasions there may be a few men. But His Majesty never comes. He says frankly, "I don't care for women"—which nobody believes to be really true!

The imperial court at Berlin is so modern itself that it has no traditions to conserve, but over in lovely little Dresden there is, on New Year's evening, a picturesque ceremony, a relic of the mediæval ages, full of poetry and romance. In the olden days it was the custom for the courtiers to go to the king's palace at this time,

and they paid their respects as he sat playing cards beneath the candlelight; and to-day, if you are invited there to court, you file past a group of three or four card tables; the King and his suite, every one intent upon the game except the King, whose aide-de-camp stands behind his chair and whispers the card for him to throw. For the King must nod to each one of the several hundred people who file past him, the ladies, with their long trains folded and hung over their arms, except it be a princess, who has the right to sweep past with her train on the floor. The candles still light the room, but there seems to be a million of them in a soft, mellow flood radiating from crystal chandeliers. Slowly the King throws down a card from his hand, then bows as a curtseying lady catches his eye, then another card—another nod—another card—another nod. The game at the tables goes on all evening, until the long procession has come to an end, and—like it has always been for hundreds of years—the King's card score is always the one that wins.

The life of the old-fashioned aristocracy goes on in Berlin the same to-day as fifty years ago, among impoverished dignitaries of the state, the army, and the navy, who grudgingly offer each year the smallest number and the most economically appointed dinners and receptions possible under the rigid etiquette, which forces them to entertain their colleagues and superior officers. The pomposity of these affairs would sometimes be appalling, if not so amusing because so characteristically German. One can almost imagine one-

self back in the old days, when princesses promenaded up and down the Linden in cotton frocks and cotton gloves, and when the old King of Prussia and his children went to the Christmas fair and carried home presents and gingerbread tied up in brown paper parcels.

The German diplomatists *intime* in these circles, the representatives of the small states which make up the empire, embody all the nation's passion for the dignity of officialdom, and are the most distinguished appearing men of the Berlin corps. I have in mind one old fellow, tall, angular, but graceful, who would wander into the drawing-rooms of his friends with sublime and delightful nonchalance, his small Blenheim spaniel tucked into his waistcoat, and take up a position in the middle of the floor before levelling his eyeglass for a steady, unblushing inspection of the guests. The gold bracelet on his wrist would slip up and down, and the antique rings covering the third and fourth fingers up to the knuckles displayed to the best advantage. He was never presented unless he asked to be, but if his gaze encountered a woman friend's, he would wander over and say, "Is it really you?" then seat himself with a gradual down-letting impossible to describe, the little Blenheim peering out with impertinent big eyes and ugly nose, growling if any one approached. But his master would sit there calmly aloof until a maid brought him tea, and the hostess came his way, while I would nestle down in some corner and watch him with fascinated curiosity. And I have seen more than one foreign ambassador follow him and his kind in Germany with won-

dering, admiring eyes—the highest product of social aplomb.

It is in these drawing-rooms where you meet the long-haired, æsthetic masculine beings whom you have perhaps noticed skating in the Tiergarten, their long coats flapping in the breeze; and dozens of young army officers, whose cheeks are scarred with wounds from many duels. They talk Wagner and Schopenhauer with serious appreciation, and whisper in the *fräulein's* ear, in the midst of the waltz, spinning her giddily round and round like an animated top, "You are as beautiful as (ecstatically)—as a dachshund!"

It is their supreme compliment.

A friend of my mother's was among the first of the American girls to marry into official life in Germany, and, with her daughter, herself the wife of a German prominent in diplomatic affairs, and a woman now with married daughters of her own, I have passed many happy and interesting days.

Those were the days when William the First was Emperor and Augusta Empress, the ambitious, intellectual woman who was proud to say that, as a young girl, she had known Goethe, then an old man. His private life she never thought of criticising, according to the German standard of that day, and of this, which gives every freedom of rapid living to the man, but none to the woman. But she tried to make her court a model of purity, and banished any woman touched by scandal. Yet, as human nature is the same at every



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The Kaiser as a young man

court and in every cottage, it is not changed by royal decree.

Women like the American Countess von Hatzfeldt, with the bewildering, bewitching *beauté de diable*—and temperament to match—soon came under Augusta's displeasure. The daughter of a Parisian actress, and a rich, indulgent American father, she had not long been introduced at the German court before her lively escapades excited and amused us. Her husband adored her, and even after she went off with a young army officer, he took her back—when he found her one winter evening kneeling before him in the snow as he left his house—tenderly drew her up into his arms, and carried her indoors. It was a little drama of the nobility of man's rare forgiveness, but it soon became a tragedy of the woman's usual paying, when Bismarck offered Hatzfeldt the post as ambassador to London, but, acting upon the commands of the Empress, demanded that he divorce his wife. Hatzfeldt refused point-blank, but the insistence of the countess won the day, the legal separation was made, with all the world to know, and Hatzfeldt was officially alone in his hospitalities of the diplomatic world of London. His divorced wife was frequently with him, and he lived with her openly upon her country estate, and, at last, when there were grandchildren about their knees, they were remarried, and one of the most extraordinary domestic situations of Europe was adjusted. One meets sometimes to-day with the countess, privately in the homes of her Berlin relatives, a stooping figure, un-

sightly spectacles over her eyes, worshipped by her family, ostracised eternally at court, her purse open to every beggar, her debts forever huge.

The present Kaiser, Augusta's grandson, has done his best to emulate her example of austerity at court. But he likewise has had to endure many things, and life has gone on much the same, fast and furious where men and women were reckless and conscienceless, whatever their birth or high degree.

The days of the Empress Augusta and the Chancellor Bismarck were the days when a German diplomat who married an American knew that it meant his resignation to Bismarck, who would have nothing of the "rule of petticoats" he thought she represented, but the days also of the power and prestige of the American Countess von Waldersee, a relative of the imperial family through her first marriage with Prince Frederick of Schleswig-Holstein, a dainty, delicate little figure, with soft, innocent blue eyes and a placid brow, who never cared to wear the magnificent jewels every one knew she possessed, nor to dress with any pretence of style, a Puritan come to court fresh from prayers and meditations.

One was glad, those days, to laugh at such small things as von Moltke's extreme economy, with his wig which never grew grey with his age, and to weep over the romance of the Emperor, who, on his ninetieth birthday, was found with the portrait of the dead Princess Radziwill clasped to his heart, as she had looked in her far-off youth and beauty and radiance of love for him.

I remember as a young girl that we used to walk softly in the Rauchstrasse, near the Tiergarten, to see the splendid old tree which had been the scene of their *rendezvous*, and which was never disturbed during his lifetime, although occupying a valuable building-site.

It was in the middle eighties when I first saw William the First and Augusta, at a ball given in one of the provinces during the army manœuvres by the *landtag* (state legislature) of the province. The night before the ball we had the *zapfenstreich*, which was the concert given by the bands of the army corps marching to the accompaniment of torchlights to dispel the darkness; and for the ball we went to the theatre belonging to the royal castle of the province, where there was an immense tent erected in the garden, under which a thousand people were assembled. The theatre was at the top of the building, and underneath it was a large hall which led directly into the garden, the walls having been knocked out for this special occasion. The royalties were grouped together in the hall, surrounded by the local dignitaries, and the *landesdirector's* wife had the supreme honour of her life when the Emperor gave her his arm to open the ball. Down the middle aisle they marched, then up and down the sides of the room, the Emperor, tall and stately, and almost benevolent-looking, with his white beard and bushy side-whiskers. In the procession were his two brothers, Carl and Albert, all three of them over six feet tall, magnificent and majestic figures. Afterwards, there was supper upstairs in the theatre, where the stage was a mass of

flowers around a big, high-spouting fountain, arranged there temporarily at great expense. And a party of us sat for hours in one of the theatre boxes, looking down upon the brilliant scene.

It was at this time, during the army manœuvres, that I first saw the present Kaiser, then a young colonel of the *Leib Guard Hussars* at Potsdam, distinguished-looking in his uniform, with red coat, black trousers trimmed with gold, and topboots bordered with gold, but much shorter than the men of his house in the preceding generation. He was extremely musical, had charming manners, was very amenable to regimental discipline, and took his place behind his superior officers without show of demur. He had nothing to say in the government, of course, and little to say to any one in fact. Upon this occasion he appeared to be enjoying himself to the full, but apparently he did not, as, under his *régime*, the provinces no longer entertain their Kaiser. He does it all himself. But no one can say that the old order may not come back. It might be returned to-morrow—no one can ever know!

Bismarck I never saw in society either in Berlin or any place else, but I remember hearing him in the Reichstag upon that famous day when he was speaking for the enlargement of the army, and thundered out: "We fear God, but no one else in the world." His wife received once a week at her house in the Wilhelmstrasse, but it was a quiet, unpretentious gathering always, and generally rather dreary. Neither she nor any one else had a *salon* those days as in Paris during the same

period. She was supposed to be so domestic as to be hostile to her husband's political career, but after his fall she was the one of the two who was the more bitter.

Those were the days when the beloved Frederick was crown prince, and his English wife, Queen Victoria's daughter, was like a cagèd bird, vainly beating her wings against Germany's prejudice and hatred; when she rode out in her state coach, attended by a young page on the steps, von Seckendorff, to whom she was a deity, and who gave her his life with an absolute devotion wonderful to behold. Up to the time of his recent death, Seckendorff was one of the greatest ornaments of Berlin society, a genuine connoisseur, and a practical artist as well, a slender man, with blue eyes and a fresh complexion, the out-of-doors habits of an English sportsman, and the most sincere friend England has had in Germany for a century. He was a man of noble heart and soul, a fit mate even for an empress. If he inspired in the Empress Frederick that extraordinary second passion which comes sometimes to a woman, generally for a man much her junior, and rekindles the fires of her beauty, intelligence, and charm for the brief period of mating before the fire dies out altogether—if, in her later years, unhappy and estranged from her son, a comparatively young widow, to whom life must still have meant the eagerness for love and happiness—she found it in a secret marriage with Count von Seckendorff, who can be anything but glad?

I happened to be in Berlin when, as empress, she

held the only court of her brief *régime*, at two o'clock in the afternoon, sitting on the throne robed in black from head to foot, and her face hidden by a crape veil, while a long procession of women, likewise veiled in crape, filed past the throne, their black gowns high in the neck, and skirts banded with crape a quarter of a yard wide, and long folds of double crape falling upon the floor the length of court trains. No one who witnessed it will ever forget that spectral procession. There was not a yard of crape to be bought in all Germany for weeks afterwards!

Turning back, my memories take me to an early evening in January over twenty years ago, when my husband and I, in our quiet rooms in one of the then fashionable hotels in Berlin, were getting ready for the first court function of the year. I believe it is now almost universally called the *Schleppen Cour*, because the court trains (*schleppen*) make there their only appearance of the year; but we in those days spoke of it as the *Defilir Cour*, it having been such a short time since the new order had been established, which holds up to to-day, the Empress Augusta becoming too old for the fatigue of passing through the lines of curtseying ladies ranged along each side of the presentation-room, and receiving them instead in a defile past the throne.

The time of which I write was, of course, after William II had come to the throne; he was considered untried and immature, and Bismarck was still the master of the empire. But I remember with what nervous haste we hurried through our dressing that night, ap-

palled at the possibility of arriving late before this haughty-eyed young man, already the exponent of "*Ich und Gott*"—and how we laughed at the way my little German maid jumped as if she had been shot when we heard the horn blast of the Kaiser's carriage, as he drove furiously down the Linden, coming in from Potsdam for the court. Personally, I was as much in awe of him as was my little maid, and am still to-day, seeing him everywhere when in Berlin, in imagination or reality, as one sees—and feels when out of sight—the martial figure over the Brandenburger Thor towering over the city, a commanding guardian spirit.

I remember that my dress that night was of rose silk with duchess lace flounces that went round and round the narrow skirt like a corkscrew, and with a bertha cut off below the shoulders. How old-fashioned it sounds—and how grand I thought it was! The train was of rose velvet embroidered in seed pearls—no modish American woman would wear it to-day at court. And yet it seemed then too beautiful to put on, as it lay the length of the sofa and two or three chairs besides, and as we spread it out on the floor and the cord was adjusted around my shoulders.

My husband, interrupting his own dressing, came in from his bedroom and helped pin me up, with strong safety pins hidden at the top to make it tight to my dress. Being a foreigner, I did not have to follow the German rule of a train from the waist, and I did not have to wear the regulation German court head-dress. Together, he and the maid folded the train like a big

bedspread or a huge tablecloth, and then hung it over my arm, which began at once to ache in anticipation of carrying such a load for two or three hours. After which, how humbly he asked me to help him with his tie, kneeling down so I could get at it, how he patted me gently and said it was perfect when I did the best I could, with my hands shaking with excitement, and how I discovered him at the last moment covertly rescuing it from where it had lodged under his ear. But he ignored the incident, kissed my hand with a gallant air, and said gravely, but with a tell-tale twinkle in his eye: "The really beautiful part of this gown is the inner lining—or shall I call it the filling, my dear?"

At last we were off, driving out in a blinding snowstorm, a gaping crowd at the hotel doors giving us a cheer. And at last we had passed the guards, and were in the midst of the blazing lights of the palace, in the midst of the brilliant gala uniforms of the diplomatic corps—in the midst of the staid and solemn movement of scene so characteristic of the country of savants and philosophers—where pleasure is taken in the matter-of-fact way of bread and butter and beer, not like the Parisians or the Romans take it, delicately and fastidiously as one does *paté de fois gras*, or sip it daintily and slowly as one does sparkling champagne, with mounting vivacity and animation of charm.

There was little display of jewelry among the women —a really handsome tiara created a sensation. For poverty was then about the only possession of the old families; they had, many of them, given up to the



Invitation to a Court Ball in Berlin

state their jewels and family plate during the war of 1812, and had again made enormous sacrifices in the Franco-Prussian war. And it was before the modern fashion of paste gems and borrowed gems, in every capital and at every court. Berlin jewellers, in common with those of London, Petersburg, and Rome, had not yet begun to rent out their precious stones, booking them weeks in advance as an impresario does a variety actress, and making tiaras at court these days as common as cabbages in Covent Garden market.

Finally I found myself making my way between two rows of court pages in the line up to the throne, and two imposing-looking gentlemen of the household, one on either side, were spreading out my train on the floor, moving their long wands skilfully under the heavy velvet.

The lady just ahead of me, a stout Frenchwoman of the provinces and the *bourgeoisie*, whose husband had suddenly become a power in politics, sedately carried a train showing the wide white muslin border along the edge, put there by the dressmaker to protect it in the making, and which the owner apparently thought to be part of the decoration. It was so amusing that I forgot where I was, and looked around to find my husband and prove to him, what I had often contended, that the genius for clothes was Parisian, not French—then I saw the Emperor frown and the Empress display the tiniest shadow of a smile on her good-natured face—and then I was myself before the throne. I wondered afterwards that I had not forgotten my curtseys,

as an agitated lady with defective eyesight had done the year before, and was reminded by a startling and imperious "Good-night" from His Majesty when she found herself quite beyond the imperial dais.

Being foreigners, we went before any of the Germans, and, as we would have had to wait an hour or two for supper, which came when the ceremony of presentation was quite finished, we were back at our hotel by half-past nine and having a modest little meal in our rooms, a hot-water bottle against my arm, quite worn out with carrying the train. In the present day it is the fashion among the foreigners who go to the *Schleppen Cour* to dash through the streets from the palace in motor cars hung with flowers and ablaze with lights, and fill the big restaurants for supper, where all the world and his wife may gaze upon their finery in ill-concealed envy.

The court balls, following soon after, had the additional note of brilliancy lent by the presence of the German army and naval officers, who are too numerous to be included at the other. The Germans are passionately fond of dancing, and the polonaise and lanciers, quaint old dances recently revived at court, they accomplish with grace and beauty, the officers going through the *pirouettes* and *chassez-croisez* in high boots, spurs, and swords, with incredible ease. One is not allowed to reverse at a court ball in Berlin—it is the imperial code of ultra modesty, and it is often safer for a foreign-born woman to stand by and look on than take the chances of being reprimanded by a lady-

in-waiting because her skirts twirled around her ankles and showed her stockings. To the German woman, the faster she can be spun the greater her joy. To swoon almost with dizziness places her in the seventh heaven of delight.

But the most brilliant spectacle of the winter was the gala opera in honour of the Kaiser's birthday, when, from one of the stalls allotted to the ladies of the diplomatic corps, I looked down upon the parquet thronged with the uniformed men of the imperial government, the senate, and municipality of Berlin, with the boxes filled with cabinet ministers, ambassadors, generals, and admirals. Into the royal boxes, looking truly majestic and imperial, came the Emperor, bowing with the regularity of a man chopping wood, and the Empress, the King of Saxony, the King of Wurtemburg, and almost all the grand dukes of the empire, in Berlin to pay homage to the Hohenzollern chief and his consort. They all bowed to the right of the gallery, and the rows of women swept down in a simultaneous movement, charming to behold; then to the left, and jewels flashed and decorations glistened as the lines swept down again in soft billows of lace and satin.

X

THE IMPERIAL FAMILY

My husband was an authority upon a certain phase of international law then occupying the attention of Germany and the United States, and the Kaiser sent for him through the American minister—it was before the post was raised to the rank of an embassy. But when he was in the palace, and just about ascending the stairs leading up to the audience room, he was suddenly confronted by the little Crown Prince, riding madly down on the balustrade, and saluting as he rolled off at the bottom—to be caught by a palace servant and carried back, howling and struggling. My husband was kept waiting fifteen minutes in the anteroom, while a very audible chastisement took place behind the closed doors. And when His Majesty finally received him, with face flushed and eye flashing, he seemed to have forgotten entirely about the subject of international law—for he spent the entire hour in a dissertation on the necessity of parental discipline—to a man who had no children of his own!

Cecil Rhodes, some years afterwards, was telling us about his audience with the Kaiser, remarkable because the visitor was allowed to do most of the talking. Rhodes had gone to Berlin to inspect some electrical

works near the city, and the Emperor sent for him through the British ambassador, who, however, made his demands for court dress so imperatively that Rhodes refused to go unless in his "everyday" clothes. I remember Mr. Rhodes saying that he was so annoyed at the ambassador's "flunkeyism"—as he called it—that he went further than he ought to have done, and purposely walked into the audience chamber with his slouch hat tucked under his arm, and sat down at once, which happened to be before the Kaiser did. But, naturally enough, this independence quite won William II's heart, and he entered into a long and intimate conversation about English affairs, finally demanding, "Now, why is it that I am not popular in England?" The South African was enough of a diplomat to reply that His Majesty had many friends in England, but the question was persisted in, and then followed up with, "What can I do to make myself popular?" "Suppose you just try doing nothing," Rhodes had answered before he thought. The Kaiser frowned ominously, his piercing eyes upon his visitor; then he slapped him on the back and broke into laughter. He saw the joke.

However, Rhodes in his turn became embarrassed, and he got up to go, saying that he was due out at the electrical works, which brought out a volley of more questions, and the Kaiser confessed that he had never seen them and had no idea they were so important. "The next morning," Mr. Rhodes said, "I was not yet up when one of the Emperor's aides-de-camp, an old

friend of mine, burst into my room and dropped exhausted into an easy-chair. 'See here, Rhodes, how long are you staying in Berlin?' he asked me, and when I naturally enquired why he wanted to know, he said that he hoped if I did stay, I wouldn't be giving the Kaiser any more free advice; they had all been up since four o'clock that morning dragging themselves through that electrical plant."

If he takes the notion, the Kaiser may keep a distinguished foreigner waiting in Berlin for a week to be received—but I believe it is not always whimsical contrariness, and that he frequently has a slight cold and wants to wait—until he is able to do all the talking. But it is never safe for a celebrated foreigner, especially an army officer, to stop in Berlin without the proper clothes, in case the Emperor wants to summon him to an audience. A friend of my husband's, a noted American general long since retired from the service, was unofficially in the German capital for a few days, and, not having his uniform, was considerably disconcerted when the ambassador informed him that he was invited to be the Emperor's guest at the military manœuvres at Potsdam. He went, of course, in plain clothes, and explained the situation with many apologies, but was told, with a cordial smile: "It doesn't make the least bit of difference. I would be glad to see you in your nightshirt."

It would be difficult to find a more thorough aristocrat than the Kaiser. With himself it is forever, "*Ich*

und Gott," and he takes care that his crack regiment, the *Garde du Corps,* shall be as exclusive as any in Europe. Astride upon a royal charger, clad in their cuirassier uniform of white, his head thrown back, his eyes gleaming under the helmet of shining brass, crested with the Hohenzollern eagle, he is the majestic war lord of mediæval times in its perfect embodiment.

His officers are the pick of the empire's ancient lineage, but in building up Berlin he has been shrewd enough to recognise the uses of democracy. As an ambassador remarked—after he was out of the service—"The Kaiser visits and receives wherever he has an axe to grind." He has built up a plutocratic Berlin, raised coal barons to the rank of princes, and feasted in his palace the mighty bankers who, in other years, stood fawning and cringing in the anteroom. Their wives and daughters give superb balls and theatricals, which make a Berlin season to-day a thing of magnificence and splendour, and their sons are setting up racing stables and affecting the monocle and the swagger of the English sportsman. It is all a change to add gaiety and cosmopolitanism to the German capital, but it will never be genuinely attractive to the cosmopolitan until one meets there at court the eminent men and women of learning, received on equal terms as in London and Paris.

I said to my husband a good many times that I envied him his introduction to the Crown Prince, but my own was not without incident. He had then become

himself a father, and capable of being as grave and dignified as any state ceremony demanded of its heir to the throne, but still unable, happily, to repress entirely the natural gaiety and spontaneity of his disposition. I had gone to a diplomatic ball, where he was expected, but had not seen him, and remarked to my escort in a disappointed tone that I had come on purpose to see the Crown Prince—had he appeared? The gentleman had scarcely time to whisper, "Why, there he is, right at your elbow," when he came up, made a profound bow, with his heels clicking together in the most approved German fashion, laughing and holding out his hand, "Good-evening, madame; I am the Crown Prince." He had on the dress uniform of a naval officer, a short jacket with white military collar braided in silver, his "ventilation" uniform, he calls it, because there are no coat-tails, and he can wear it open, and he walked about unceremoniously, pumping his arms up and down in his favourite gesture, making his bow before half the women in the room, remembering their names, and beaming down upon them with his bright boyish smile, appealing in its simplicity and genuineness. His tall figure is excessively thin, and the face, with its big, blond moustache, is far from handsome, and he himself would be the first to declare that his intellectual capacity paled into insignificance before his father's. But he is adored throughout the length and breadth of the empire, and will ascend the throne as "The Well Beloved."

It was good to see him and the Crown Princess



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The children of the German Crown Prince: Prince William, five years old and a future Kaiser; Prince Louis Ferdinand, aged four; and Prince Hubertus, aged two

dancing together, her numerous dimples twinkling in and out like so many stars, making her face prettily piquant, and her soft eyes full of tenderness and sweetness. Both of them were missing at supper time, and we discovered that the hostess had arranged a table for them and a few of their intimate friends at the top of the big house, in the children's nursery, where the sounds of their hilarity could not penetrate below.

Under their influence there has actually developed a "smart set" at the Berlin court, a thing one would have thought, in the days of the Empress Augusta, impossible ever to come to pass. They have set the rage for Parisian dressmakers and Viennese tailors, for bright little dinner dances, elegant and vivacious, and, like the *Faubourg Révolté* of the young Parisian aristocracy, they refuse to be bored by people or by things not entertaining in themselves, but tolerated hitherto because they had a dozen generations of time behind them.

It was the Crown Princess who started the fashion for wearing picture hats with ball dresses, when they were staying at Heiligendamm, a little resort on the Baltic; coming to a dance in a white silk frock with a big hat of white and pink roses. Her cousin, the Duchess Antoinette of Mecklenburg, wore a hat of yellow silk gauze, the same material as her dress, and all the young ladies of the *entourage*, hearing of the proposed innovation, followed it. The *tout-ensemble* was charming, but dancing was difficult. However, it was far away from solemn Berlin, and the merrymaking went

on fast and furious. One evening the Crown Prince started a series of bicycle races round and round the pier, and the next night several of his friends came upon the scene with wheelbarrows. The Duchess Antoinette was taking a ride, a young guardsman steering the barrow, when he suddenly tumbled over into the sea and was rescued in the midst of a gale of laughter, which redoubled when he declared that he and the duchess had arranged the whole thing beforehand.

The Crown Prince admired enthusiastically his great-uncle, King Edward, and philosophers who want to speculate upon his position in Germany when he becomes emperor have only to study the career and influence of Edward VII. As emperor he will be the leader of society in Europe, and he will be held in deep affection by all classes in his empire, as he has taken the time to go among them in his simple, unaffected way, with that bright, kindly smile which wins hearts among his father's bitterest enemies; and the grave, delicate questions of state will be left in the hands of German statesmen. Germany will lose the strong and extraordinary personality of the Kaiser, so respected, and even feared, in Europe, and the dominating personality since the death of King Edward, but it is not at all likely that Germany will suffer. German statesmen have a passion for the *Vaterland*, and will not betray her interests. And the Crown Prince has shown a marked tendency to accept advice from those older and wiser than himself—a quality in the ruler which would have saved Germany difficulties in several ex-

tremely delicate situations, had the present Kaiser possessed it.

The Crown Prince came of age in 1900, and a year or two later it was discovered that he was in debt some $20,000; and he was sent on a long sea cruise as a punishment. But his mother and father were largely to blame. As a boy he was always kept upon a very small allowance; his father believed in making it small for the sake of discipline, and his mother for the sake of economy. Then he was suddenly made Governor of Pomerania and Prince of Oels, which brought with it large revenues. This money seemed to him an enormous sum, and the first year or two he spent it recklessly. But one hears nothing of his extravagance these days. As an all-round sportsman, the Crown Prince is King Edward's equal. He is a dead shot, and when he was nineteen he killed eight boars during one hunt near Berlin. He can ride like an Indian, and can keep his seat on the wildest colt in his father's stable. His feat in riding his horse up the steps of the palace at Potsdam is well known. The way he handles the ribbons over a four-in-hand is one of the sights of Berlin. He is fond also of driving tandem, but loves best to be on the back of a horse. He is an expert swordsman and swimmer. But a favourite pastime is playing tennis; he is one of the best tennis-players in Germany, but refuses to play with a person who is willing to let him win because of his rank.

At Bonn he did not make a brilliant record as a student, being more interested in athletics, and it must

be confessed that he was more interested in having a good time. Once when it was reported that he was ill in bed, he was really enjoying the sights of gay Paris, having managed to elude the professors and slip away. His father discovered it, of course, and the young man had *un mauvais quart d'heure.* But he could not be induced to believe that he had done anything so very wrong, and he maintained his position with tenacity. Although so extremely popular generally, he was not so with the students at Bonn, but that was probably because he declined to drink as much beer as German students think is necessary to an education, and because he rebuked a student one day who told an indecent story at a banquet.

His greatest accomplishment is his music. He has a Stradivarius violin which belonged to Queen Louise, and he prizes it more highly than even his horses. He will practise upon it for hours, and then take it under his arm to the house of a friend. He has composed several things for the violin. But he does not care for Wagner, which pleases his father—the Kaiser having long ago settled Wagner's place in history for all loyal subjects. The Crown Prince is a sunny-natured fellow, with the kindest heart imaginable, and a poetical temperament that makes him think all women are angels. As a young man he was easily susceptible to feminine charm, and it is doubtless true that he has sown his wild oats. But when one considers the fact that the most beautiful and fascinating women of society and the stage will spend years trying to attract

the attention of a royal prince, and scheme to inveigle him into an intrigue, the remarkable thing is that he has not horrified Europe and indulged in the open and shameless excesses so well known to exist among royal princes. But he has always been devoted to his mother, in spite of her trying to keep him in leading-strings. He has always had a special salute for her, which he gives no one else. His friends say that he never tried to conceal anything from his mother nor from his father either, even when he knew the Kaiser would regard as a disgraceful escapade what was in reality nothing but a boyish prank.

The woman who will share his throne will wield a great influence upon the nation, because the Crown Prince has a nature which demands a woman's sympathy. And the Crown Princess has the happy combination from her German father of sense and stability, and from her mother the vivacity and charm which have made the Russian Grand Duchess Anastasia famous. The average German *mädchen* has not enough of the coquette about her to have pleased Prince Wilhelm's fancy. He has been attracted momentarily to several American girls, who have thrown themselves at his head. But the American girl herself he does not understand, nor particularly admire. He is somewhat afraid of her.

Women in the everyday walks of life who have a day at home may take the domestic delight of getting the house in readiness for their friends and receiving

them when they come to call, but etiquette does not allow an empress such pleasures. Every one who goes to court in Berlin must call upon the Kaiserin at the beginning of the season, but it is her mistress of ceremonies, Countess Brockdorff, who receives them for her, a tall, stately woman, whose black hair has grown gray in the royal service, and whom strangers at court recognise at once by the black lace scarf which she wears draped from her hair and falling below her waist. You call at her apartment in the Schloss on Monday, Thursday, or Saturday, from three to five, giving your card to a lackey at the door, who takes it to a gentleman-in-waiting sitting at the hall table, and who enters it in the visitors' book. You are then escorted through several rather commonplace-looking *salons* of the Schloss; you make your *entrée* before the mistress of ceremonies, who is delighted to speak English, French, or German, as you prefer, who is charmed that you will be seen at court this year, and who then passes you on to the ladies of the *entourage* who are assisting her. You look in vain for a fragrant cup of tea, and fifteen minutes later make your adieux and depart, as it is expected you should do.

Countess Brockdorff is always present at the ceremonies of state, and at the *Schleppen Cour*, when presentations are made before the throne. She stands just behind the Empress and whispers the name into her ear, as Count von Eulenburg, leaning on his long wand of office, does to the Emperor. There are also

Countess Keller and Fräulein von Gernsdorff, who are *hofstaatsdamen* (ladies-of-state), and whom the Empress has living with her the year around, giving each of them a private apartment in the Schloss at Berlin and at Potsdam, with a lady's-maid and a lackey from the royal servants, and an automobile or a carriage from the royal stables, as well as a large salary and the promise of a pension upon retirement. Then she has a *hofdame* and two *ehrendamen* (ladies-of-honour), who alternate in service for a few weeks at a time. One of them, Countess Bassewitz, is celebrated for her tall, blonde beauty and *chic* dressing, somewhat in contrast, it must be confessed, to many of the women of the German court. When the Kaiserin's daughter made her appearance in society, Fräulein von Saldern was chosen by the mother as lady-in-waiting, and she is seldom absent from the side of the princess.

This young lady lives with her parents and has no establishment of her own, but she has her own "household," quite another thing, occupying a large suite of rooms with her bed-room and sitting-room, a bed-room and sitting-room for her lady-in-waiting, a bed-room for her personal maid, and keeping still intact her beloved schoolrooms, which her mother long ago taught her to love, with their books and flowers, and embroidery frames.

The princess has been strictly disciplined, but her mother allows her greater freedom out at Potsdam than in Berlin. A year or two ago, when her father sur-

prised her on her birthday with an officer's uniform, and presented her before a regiment of tall soldiers at Potsdam as their commanding officer, she raced excitedly after the ceremony through the Schloss and up into her mother's apartments, where the room was full of ladies taking tea, and burst in, dishevelled and wild with delight, her pet dachshund in her arms panting as hard as herself. She was not reproved, as every one thought she would be.

When the court goes into residence at Potsdam for the summer, the Empress is openly contented and happy, for out there she becomes as much as possible nothing but the wife of her husband and the mother of her children. The park has romantic stretches of water and forest, and her apartments overlook Frederick the Great's "Sans Souci," with its memories of Voltaire, and its manufactured ruins, which Frederick had built to finish off the landscape. Each of the married sons has his own palace at Potsdam, but the family circle is complete almost every evening; every one dresses simply, and the Kaiser expects to be treated as a country gentleman by his *entourage*. In Berlin he demands the homage of the sovereign; at Potsdam, the light-hearted gaiety of private life.

It is when living at Potsdam that the Empress sends for her old servants to come and visit her. She makes a point of knowing all the royal servants personally; if they become ill she goes to see them, and when they are too old to work she pensions them off. The wages are good, and the presents at Christmas time, in ac-



The Kaiser's only daughter, Princess Luise, wearing the uniform of the Black Hussars. "The death's head" on the military hat was adopted in the war of 1812 against Napoleon I, when the regiment were Rough Riders, giving no quarter to the enemy

cordance with German custom, are, to an American, enormous.

The Empress has a retinue of *kammerfrauen* (chamber-maids), who take care of her dresses, although not as many as the Kaiser needs of men servants for his extraordinary and imposing wardrobe of uniforms. They are servants by name and servants in a sense, for the position forfeits the right to go to court, as in England, when a nobleman enters the retail trade. But the *kammerfrauen* are often the daughters of impoverished military men of high rank. They have a good salary—and all the gowns of the imperial wardrobe! The Empress wears her dresses only a few times, and her maids are then allowed to sell them for their own benefit. It is not at all an unusual thing to see Her Majesty's gowns on other ladies, although never worn, of course, in her presence.

It is a trusty *kammerfrau* who is responsible for the Kaiserin's jewels; they are carefully examined after being worn, and locked up in the strong room, where the gold- and silver-ware is kept. Then the Empress has a multitude of jewels, which are sewn on her gowns, a collection of several hundred small diamonds, for instance, with a setting at the back like a button, so that they can be easily fastened on a court train or used in forming a panel design down the front of the gown. These must be counted before the dressmaker takes charge of them, and counted again when removed from the dress. The gowns themselves are hung in a long room lined with wardrobes, and there is a special room

for the hats, each one in a glass compartment fitted with milliner's stands, where the violet sachet bags are kept fresh and fragrant.

The household linen is made especially with the Hohenzollern crest woven in the damask, and it is all kept under lock and key in cedar chests built in the walls of the linen-room, and given out by the *ober-beschliesserin* (upper linen servant), or by one of her faithful *unter-* (under) *beschliesserinnen.* This is a room which the Empress enjoys visiting and personally supervising, often spending an hour there looking over the things as they come in fresh from the laundry, each article tied up by the dozen, and those which are badly worn are judiciously darned and mended with true housewifely forethought.

The laundries both in Berlin and at Potsdam are models of electrical machinery, the plans having had the personal attention of the Emperor. The clothes are cleansed by electricity, there are big electrical "drums" in which they are dried in a jiffy, then they are run off on a mangle, and folded with lightning rapidity.

The ordinary rich man's household has a butler of august appearance, whose solemnity is unimpeachable, but at the Schloss there are several *haushofmeister* who perform the butler's duties in keeping household accounts, superintending the setting of the tables, and pouring out the wine at luncheon and dinner. They announce the guests who are commanded to the Schloss, and lead them up in faultless style to the court equerry,

who receives them for the sovereigns; their livery of black satin breeches and pink silk stockings, and black coats trimmed with silver buttons, adding not a little to the beauty of the *tout-ensemble*. Each one of the *haushofmeister* has a staff of assistants belonging to the second rank of palace servants; their black coats are nearly covered with wide gold braid. And then come the lackeys who, during the winter season, multiply about the Schloss by the dozen, obsequious creatures with the agility of a jack-in-the-box, whose ambition reaches no prouder height than their livery embroidered in red arabesques and the black eagle of the Hohenzollern family.

Since the days when the Kaiserin was Princess Augusta Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein, her masses of grey hair have added distinction to her appearance, and she has unconsciously assumed a more regal bearing. But she is the same quiet, simple, home-loving woman. She never mixes in politics, has no particular intellectual aspirations, although a trifle bigoted in her religion, perhaps. Her face glows with sweetness and amiability, softening perceptibly the effect of the Kaiser's stern immobility, and creating an atmosphere of peace and happiness throughout her household. Restless women of her own country join with those in other countries to decry the narrow orbit in which she revolves. But in the midst of unhappy queens, she has reigned supreme in her husband's heart, and is as happy and proud with her tall sons and slender young daughter as the humblest of her subjects.

XI

A SMALL GERMAN COURT

A MOMENT of intimacy with a friendly person will come sometimes in the midst of the greatest formality and ceremony. And one evening, in Berlin, it somehow happened, as we were all crowded together at a ball, one of the princesses whose husband ruled in his small state, a Russian by birth, whom I had known in her own land, and a beautiful young creature with rebellious dark eyes and a determined chin, said to me suddenly, "Will you spend a few days in the country with us next week? I am bored to death." My face very evidently expressed my surprise, because she added quickly, wilfully tossing her head, "Yes, I know it is an indiscretion of etiquette, but will you come?" And I replied as quickly, "It is a command, Highness, which I am only too happy to obey."

The next week, after a short railroad journey in the early morning, I arrived at a little station as ugly and modern-looking as Berlin itself; a lady-in-waiting met me, and in fifteen minutes we were transported into another world, full of the charm of antiquity, and were driving along an avenue of stately lime trees up to the castle. It was a romantic structure of a hundred rooms or more, with an old Roman tower at one corner terraced as a winter garden, nestling upon the side

of a hill covered with fragrant pine trees, while at the back a great forest stretched for miles into the country. Part of it had been enclosed as a private park, much against the protests of the citizens, who thought the Prince had no right to do it, and had protested in vigorous Teutonic language, but the main road traversing it was open to the public from sun-up to sun-down. A river wound its way around the foot of the hill, and lost itself in the recesses of the forest.

At the gate the guard saluted as we entered the simple *porte-cochère* in the architectural style of Frederick the Great, with the family arms above it, and we clattered into the courtyard, around which were built the kitchen premises, a blacksmith shop, and a machine shop; and then, still clattering over the rough cobble stones, we came into the inner courtyard under an archway, where the family arms were also displayed, and entered the castle. The white stone staircase was simply carved, but at each landing there were marble statues and big marble vases filled with masses of hothouse flowers, warm and vivid against the whiteness.

I was soon in my sitting-room, which gave a lovely view out upon the park and the river, and down upon the winter garden, which was protected by glass all around, and had a little outside door, where a sentry kept constant guard. It led to the postern gate, which closed the second court, and was the private entrance where the family passed in and out. It was only about half-past ten upon a winter morning, but the Prince's carriage stood before it ready to take him for

his usual morning drive, the coachman in the livery used only for the family or royal guests, with a broad gold band around the hat and a gold cord hanging like an epaulette across his shoulder, and, as he drove off, the whole guard of eight stood at attention at the postern gate. The Prince's father was still alive, but the death of his wife had freed him from a bond he had never cared to assume, and, after twenty-five years of solitary state at the castle, he had resigned in favour of his son and married a woman of noble birth he had loved since a boy, but could not raise to his own rank. He still kept his own apartments upon the first floor, and joined his son's family for a few weeks every year, spending the rest of the time in happy obscurity with his new wife near Dresden. It is an idiosyncrasy of the German law that the woman of royal blood who marries beneath her assumes at once her husband's rank, as the Kaiserin's aunt, the wife of the celebrated scientist, became plain Frau von Esmarch. But a royal prince cannot give the stamp of royalty to any woman by marriage, however great his love.

When eleven o'clock struck, the butler of the household, old Fritz, made his appearance, as he did every morning, to announce the hours of the meals of the day —although they probably never varied once in a decade—and to tell us what to wear at dinner each night, full *décolletée* only for especially distinguished guests. I remember how much he amused and delighted me, old Fritz, a stout little man of seventy or more, walking a little lame, but with enormous dignity

not in the least disturbed by his ludicrous chocolate-colored wig. At meals he was by far the most important person in the dining-room, standing in the corner in the black uniform of an English butler—or an American diplomat—carrying in one hand a high silk hat and in the other a long stick topped with a big gold knob—taking infinite trouble and making no end of noise trying to keep the other servants quiet—saying "sh!" in a tone loud enough to be heard through a dozen doors! It made us all laugh, of course, and the children would say, "There goes the *Nieser* [sneezer]."

The next day was Sunday, and a busy day in the castle, as the Prince insisted upon all the servants going to church, even to the coachman—and if a guest had asked for a carriage on Sunday the Prince would have been shocked. But one of the gentlemen-in-waiting and the governess stayed at home, because the old court chaplain had declined to give them communion, as they did not belong to the Lutheran Church, although they were Protestants. The villagers crowded into the castle chapel, the servants filling the gallery, and the Prince and Princess and their suite in the court box, a long, roomy place reached by its own private door, at the back of the building, and behind the people, and with a glass window opening into the auditorium—which could be easily closed if the Prince found the prosy sermon too much for his nerves. It was early in the new year, and the gloomy church was gay with Christmas greens.

I was shown over the castle that afternoon, and it was also festive with its Christmas greens. The Princess's boudoir, a cosy little room furnished in the Russian style, was pretty, with a bower of mistletoe built from the centre of the ceiling among the electric lights. And as every member of the household had had a Christmas tree, there were many of them still on view. In the *Ahnen-saal* (ancestors' hall), hung with the family portraits and used for the state banquets, there were half a dozen big trees as high as could be taken through the doors, covered with glittering ornaments and shaded with candles, where they had decorated the room when the Prince and Princess had received their friends on Christmas morning, the nobility of the neighbourhood, the officers and their wives from the garrison, and the officials from the nearest town. Every one in the castle had been remembered with numerous presents, the Princess going to Berlin a month in advance to select them, after her maid had gone the rounds to discover what each one wanted. The ladies-in-waiting had some really valuable presents, a new gown displayed upon a mannikin, sets of books, and boxes of gloves—a thoughtful gift, as gloves were *en rigueur* every night for dinner. A large room had been set aside for the tables filled with gifts for the servants, and there they had all gathered the night before Christmas, cooks, housemaids, footmen, gardeners, stableboys, etc., the *kammerdiener* (head servants) carefully aloof from their inferiors, the ordinary *diener*, but each going up to shake hands with the Prince

and receive the envelope containing his present of a piece of money in gold, and then to kiss the Princess's hand. It was a typical Christmas celebration of Germany, where the habit of giving presents is a national burden, but the Princess had been courageous enough to object to receiving presents from the court and the servants—a happy change from many other establishments among royalty and the high nobility.

The first day I arrived Fritz had brought up an imposing card from the office of the *hof-marschall* (grand master of the court), announcing that he had the great honour to be commanded by the Prince and Princess to invite me to a court concert upon the Tuesday evening of the following week, and that I would be expected to wear *décolletée.* Preparations had been going on for it for a week, and, as the day drew near, Fritz's importance and pomposity visibly increased—it was worth a long journey to see.

The guests began arriving before our dinner was announced, as there were only three carriages to be hired in the village, and only a dozen or so possessed among the aristocracy. So each one made seven or eight trips up to the castle, with the father and mother, aunts and uncles, and numerous cousins, while the officers of the garrison rattled up in relays in a wagonette. From a secret vantage ground above, one of the ladies-in-waiting and I watched them thronging into the long hall, where gloomy armoured figures kept their guard of centuries. Almost all of the men were in uniform, in active service or the reserve, but

one especially I noticed, a picturesque figure in scarlet coat, black trousers, and cocked hat, with a black ribbon around the neck and the white cross of the Knight of St. John of Malta, the humane and compassionate order that accepts comradeship only among those of noble birth. Bustling about trying to make the people comfortable were the court officials, their coats covered with gold braid, and among them the men who were honorary gentlemen-in-waiting, indicated by their two gold buttons on the back of the black coat, and high collar covered with embroidery.

It must be confessed that, according to American notions, the women were not well dressed, either with taste or style. They all seemed long-limbed and short-waisted, the mammas very fat and dumpy, the young girls fresh and unspoiled, but lacking, even they, in delicacy of outline. Greeting one another and gossiping at a furious rate, they were all the time very evidently taking mental note of the company assembled, as it meant infinitely greater prestige to come to the castle to a small concert than to a large state ball.

In the music-room, the village orchestra was assembling upon the stage, and I almost gasped at the prospect—a village orchestra! But I forgot that such a one in Germany may rival our great ones in Philadelphia or Boston, and that many a great artist has made his début at the state concert of a small German court. The Prince was himself an excellent musician, and spent hours at his piano over the Wagnerian themes, although it was not etiquette ever to speak to

him about it, as he did not care to pose as a musician, and would stop playing if he thought any one were listening. He was far from being a rich man, and the castle showed many evidences of economy. The Princess had her clothes made at home by a little sewing-woman, and a fashionable American " shop lady " would have dubbed her extremely dowdy. But the Prince set aside each year a generous amount for his concerts, and made them worthy of any capital or any society in Europe. A celebrated singer had been brought from the Berlin Opera for this night, and had accepted the engagement with alacrity.

We sat at dinner through the same slow, laborious meal as if nothing were happening elsewhere, although it was enlivened by the costumes which every one had donned in advance. But we heard the servants opening the two large connecting *salons*, between the hall and the music-room, which had splendid white marble columns supporting the roof and with walls hung with wonderful old tapestries representing the Siege of Troy. At eight o'clock the people were received there by the grand master of the court, the grand mistress, with the ladies-in-waiting and the equerries. Then the arrival of the Prince and Princess was announced by three loud taps on the floor from the other side of the door, and they entered, preceded by the grand master walking backwards with the utmost ease and elegance. Everybody was standing, of course, and it was amusing to watch the high officials whose rank entitled them and their wives to sit close to the royalties, waiting for a

nod from the Princess before taking their seats. It would have created gossip for half a dozen years if a person not entitled by rank had been invited to a front seat—but still no one dared to sit down without that gracious little nod!

After the programme, and during the supper, the Princess made her circle and sent for those whom she wanted to see, a presentation many of the young girls had been looking forward to since they began playing with their dolls. In gilt chairs around the walls were the stout and comfortable-looking mothers, where, between dances, the army officers presented themselves, punctilious in their attentions, the young girl who was the object of it all standing shyly in the background, devouring the uniform with enraptured eyes.

I have often wondered how many matches were made that night. I think old Fritz could tell me. I saw him a dozen times in as many different places, his chocolate-coloured wig awry, his eye a little unsteady from too much champagne-tasting, but his immensity of dignity and importance increasing as the evening advanced.

The Princess had the Russian passion for winter sports, and the next morning she sent word for me to join her and the children out in the park, where a toboggan slide had been made along the hillside. It was the only moment during my visit when I saw her as the free and careless girl I had known in Russia, and I shall not soon forget the picture she made, sliding down

the hill in boots, leggins, and knickerbockers, a Russian shawl about her head, and shrieking with laughter. Then, suddenly, there appeared upon the scene the widow of one of the *hof-marschalls*, out for a walk in this secluded spot, an august old lady, who would have gladly passed her life prostrate before a royal throne. I thought at first she would drop dead from seeing the Princess in such a plight. But she recovered herself and fled, in a terror of disillusion. Poor Princess, no wonder she was bored to death.

XII

ENGLAND

LONDON TOWN AND THE SOCIETY OF THE COURT

It has been for years a diversion to me, and a study in social stratagem, to watch certain American hostesses finally firmly established in King Edward's favour, approach to London, the Mecca—like a play beginning in the small towns and suburbs, until it bursts upon the metropolis in the full glare and glitter of proud success—by such routes as *hôtels* in Paris, *villas* on the Riviera, *chalets* in Switzerland, or *palazzos* in Venice; and from royalty to be picked up any day on the Continent for a round of good dinners and open purse-strings—to London and to the King.

Yet the American without particular prestige who does not aspire to leadership receives a welcome denied to the English knocking at their doors. She is taken upon her own personal merit of accomplishment and charm, with the cordial condescension which considers lineage and the honours of achievement—or the lack of them—of no special importance unless of English birth! Equipped with a few good introductions, a respectable —or unpublished—past, an address in Mayfair or Bel-



The late Consuela, Duchess of Manchester

gravia, a few *décolletée* gowns not too *chic* to excite envy, and half a dozen dinner-party stories, and any woman is launched for the season. If she have the courage to cut every woman dead not likewise equipped, and to lift her head a little higher than the most supercilious, bepowdered, velvet-breeched footman, she may hope to be a genuine success, and to lay the foundation for delightful, life-enduring friendships.

And who would not have a London season who could? The sternest cynic could not rightfully condemn the devotion of money, brains, and ambition to such an end as London means. London, to which every diplomatist looks for the triumphant finale of his career, willingly exiling himself to the Sandwich Islands or Afghanistan at thirty, to work his way up and prove himself worthy at sixty of the honours and dignity of the Court of St. James. London, where society is of so much consequence that Parliament for years used to suspend its sittings for Derby Day, where Mr. Balfour's September round of golf at Berwick is gravely planned for by a Conservative cabinet, where a *risqué* play gets on the boards of the theatre because the dramatic censor is off on a yachting trip; London, where Disraeli made the Prime Minister the exalted leader of fashion next to the throne, where a great statesman is a great dandy, and as proud of his social success as of an historical speech in Parliament, and famous as a good shot or in private theatricals.

The London society of Beau Brummel and Beau

Nash, of Count d'Orsay and Lady Blessington, of Lady Holland and her *salon*, of Mrs. Montague and the Blue Stocking Club, of Chatham and Macaulay, of Peel and Lord Lytton, of Thackeray and Robert Browning—it is the same London society to-day. And whether it is from a steamer at Liverpool, with New York and sky-scrapers behind me, or from a Channel crossing with continental hotel labels covering my baggage—I always get into London with the same sigh of content. But before plunging into the stream of its life, I shut my eyes for the " cold douche " from undemonstrative English friends, who will not display the affection they feel, and, after five years of absence, respond to my effusive greetings as if I had dined with them just the night before.

Your native tongue falls gently and musically upon your ear in the soft, broad vowels of the English accent, and you breathe the sweet air of wholesome, unartificial things, and contemplate anew with wonder and delight the magnificent creatures which generations of out-of-doors living have produced, tall, straight-limbed, clear-eyed, and clear-brained men and women, veritable gods and goddesses compared to the puny Latin types.

I find it an easy duty to appear downstairs at breakfast and shake free from the lazy continental habit of coffee and rolls in bed, and a morning of slipshod négligée; to shake free also from the license of speech of the French and the Romans, and put a bridle upon tongue and vocabulary in the midst of Anglo-Saxon

thinking that is clean and pure, and with a people who have the grace to be ashamed of their sins.

After the *pseudo* counts and marquises of the Continent, whose titles no one can positively dispute because no one has a book of proof—it is refreshing to swing into the atmosphere of honesty that bluntly demands to know who and what you are, that catalogues a man with his lineage and possessions, and his claims to notice, in a book on peerage or a "Who's Who"—with a nation genuine enough frankly to avow, "We are a race of snobs." And, after the impecunious *grande dame* of Italy, the *déclassée* one of France, and the unripe one of American millions, you enjoy knowing the one of England, who is still secure in the possession of wealth and reputation, and whose patronising contempt for her social inferiors is like the English lawns and lovely hedgerows—after centuries of careful cultivation, the finished work of art!

London society to-day is undeniably affected by the democracy of riches, as is every society of Europe; but it is still a something preëminently worth while by men and women of brains and achievement, of charm and beauty, of wealth and lineage. And in spite of the fact that the state and splendour of the court of King Edward, the *Grand Monarque* of modern days, were much in the hands of hosts and hostesses who came from the great Jewish banking-houses of the Continent, from the United States, South Africa, or any other place where millionaires make their "pile," yet London remained even then the one capital where it was aristo-

cratic to be poor and equally fashionable to be respectable. The English court of King Edward's day was one of the most cosmopolitan in history, including exiled royalty, such as dethroned monarchs and pretenders, and Russian grand dukes who have married without leave, like the Czar's cousin, the Grand Duke Michael, who, with his morganatic wife, the Countess Torby, are bright, particular stars in society's firmament; the exponents of science, literature, and the drama; and giving its approving stamp of welcome to the race of Jews, seldom admitted elsewhere at court. The oldest and most famous families of that unimpeachable record of lineage, the Almanach de Gotha, found London just as much to their liking, although success there had to be won individually; an ambassador or a foreign prince was sometimes less of a social figure than a diplomatic secretary or a captain in the Guards. Mere millionaires did not "arrive," however much has been said to the contrary—a Rothschild was a *grand seigneur* perfected in the social graces before he became an intimate of the King. "But you are not in the Almanach de Gotha," an impertinent aristocrat said to one of them. "No, nor in the Almanach de Golgotha," was the retort.

Every person who has been presented at court is technically "in society," and never seems to discard its badge or its interests. Army officers in India, younger sons gone as ranchers to South Africa, colonial governors all-powerful in Canada or Australia, plan for years for a trip "home," and a fashionable

round in the London season. Edinburgh professors and Dublin doctors, who have made a stir in the world of learning, take a court presentation and a month of society as the recompense of labour. Young men rising in the world of law or literature look to society as the final goal. Financiers in the City try to get rich enough, singers famous enough, artists eccentric enough, to be noticed by society. The editor of a dominating daily put the price of his paper's political allegiance in an hour of crisis upon his election to an exclusive club. The latest hero of exploration and the latest star of the stage ascend a ladder of fame which reaches to an imposing array of dinner cards—and to the King. Members of Parliament give their teas on the terrace of the House of Commons, where any man's political distinction could be gauged by the social distinction of his women guests.

Grandfathers of eighty and fathers of sixty are actively and individually in London society, with or without their wives and daughters, handsome and immaculate, accomplished and witty, with their books of engagements carefully perused. Young ladies of name and position, whose families in the country do not care for Town, come to London these days and take a flat or a house, with a retinue of servants, a carriage, or a motor car, to do the rounds of the season. Old ladies whose families have long since married and dispersed, realise at last the joys of freedom and of fashion, stopping at their clubs, where you can find them at intervals between parties, in the smoking-room puffing cigarettes

and reading the racing-news. Middle-class millionaires and struggling gentlefolk put their sons' names down for Eton soon after they are born, and send them on to Christ Church to acquire the Oxford manner and an acquaintance with the young peers, regarding the double acquisition and its *entrée* into the London drawing-rooms as the ultimate heritage of good fortune and parental care. And the mother has finally the unspeakable delight of seeing her son galloping up and down Rotten Row in company with a nobleman's daughter—and, as he screws his monocle in his eye and surveys the promenaders with a cool, insolent stare, she draws herself up and gazes proudly forth upon all the world, with a look unmistakable of: "Well, we *are* getting on!"

Society is a pageant which all the world may see every afternoon during the season in Hyde Park as the carriages pass: high-stepping cobs and the latest style of cart, lumbering coaches and powdered footmen or diminutive "buttons" in agonies of importance, luxurious motor cars and shining victorias, all wending their way through the drives past the masses of rhododendrons, or over the five-arched bridge crossing the Serpentine into Kensington Gardens.

On Sunday morning, at church parade, the carriages pass unladen, and people throng the broad walks: young duchesses who are smart, and old ones who are dowdy; old titles and vacuous-eyed youth, and new titles with snow-white hair over lofty brows; the simplicity of moneyless greatness and the ostentation of rich medi-

ocrity; the *hauteur* of assured position and the calculating bows of climbing; coquettish grandmothers in rouge and coloured hair, looking at age as a hateful hag, with débutantes round and rosy trying to be serious and severe; women magnificently dressed with taste, or glaringly without it, men stalwart and imperious, invariably well dressed; both listless or alert, dull or intelligent, insignificant or mighty, some among them famous, and others merely well advertised.

It is a pageant in Hyde Park at the end of May or the first of June, with the imposing procession of thirty or forty splendid drags at the meeting of the Four-in-Hand Club, the ribbons manipulated with the ease and grace of skill, sometimes by a man, sometimes by a woman, as the sleek, spirited horses show their mettle in the streets when the tooting horn clears the road. It is a pageant at Newmarket, and among the coaches, brakes, and equipages of every description at Ascot, with a myriad of human beings to cheer the King when he rides out in state attended by the master and huntsmen of the Royal Buckhounds.

With the opening of Parliament, in February, the season may be said to have begun. In March or April the King and Queen hold their first courts at Buckingham Palace, and the ball of gaiety goes rolling from that time on, gaining in speed and increasing in size until June beholds the zenith. You begin in a leisurely manner among old friends, with a few luncheons and dinners, and with evening parties, when you have time to appreciate the charm of the streets and the parks under

the mellow moonlight as motor cars fly by, and hansom cabs, with the soft jingling of bells, and glimpses of floating lace and sparkling gems. But you soon find yourself with multiplying engagements, meeting new people, asking them in or going to them, until at last you are in a mad race, faster and more furious as the days come and go, keeping a book of appointments hour by hour like a commercial traveller or a labour delegate, passing in and out of famous old houses full of wonderful treasures of art and of memories, in much the same galloping way as a Cook's tour through the rooms of the Louvre; small intimacies impossible, your complexion taking on shades of green and yellow, eyes weary, and voice worn, your head in a whirl and your senses dull and dazed—like the dervish dance, which moves from its languid and measured steps up to its final gyrations and the *dénouement* when the dancer falls faint and exhausted upon the floor.

The London court of which I know, belonged to King Edward's day. Buckingham Palace became invested with the friendly air of intimacy which one takes in the homes of one's responsive friends. The stately rooms at receptions and balls held brilliant gatherings crowding up the marble stairway where the ceiling shows the soft fresco figures of Morning, Noon, and Night, passing through the sculpture hall and the green drawing-room panelled with mirrors, and into the throne-room, with its crimson walls, Italian gilding, and white marble frieze of "The Wars of the Roses," its fragrant flowers and a thousand electric lights breaking into radiance

overhead. For the state balls, foreign guests having the diplomatic *entrée* went in by the garden entrance, where the forty acres of lawn and forest trees and lovely flower beds opened a wide vista, and the supper was laid in the green drawing-room and the "Garter" room. The big ball-room on the south side of the palace was filled with women magnificently gowned, as even the dowdiest Englishwomen contrive to be in evening attire, and with men from every high walk of life, with the good looks, tall stature and general air of easy elegance which seem to be, almost universally, the attributes of the English gentleman upon his native soil.

Society was led by the old Duchess of Devonshire, the "double duchess," as she will go down in the annals of the court, a German woman who captured two English dukes, the seventh holder of the Manchester title and the eighth of that of Devonshire. She was probably as remarkable a woman as the English court has ever known. And her wedding in 1892 to Devonshire was certainly a remarkable spectacle to those guests who recognised the acquiescent face of the middle-class beauty whom the aristocratic bridegroom had loved for many years, but refused to marry, and who brought her numerous offspring to grace their father's union with a woman belonging to his own rank in life. The duchess was a political intriguer to be reckoned with, and she exercised great influence over the duke, but she could never sufficiently arouse him from his chronic *ennui* to accept the office of Prime Minister, which might have been his for the asking. He would keep

a political henchman waiting six months for an answer to an important letter of advice; the advice would be an invaluable document when it arrived, only the government could not be jogged along by such a lazy steed. The duchess was intellectually a learned woman, but a butterfly as well; she ruled society with an iron hand, but with grace and charm. Devonshire House in Piccadilly, London, which is a veritable country establishment in the heart of Town, and Chatsworth up in Derbyshire, one of the largest, richest, and most imposing places to be found in the world, were presided over by a woman who appreciated their literary and art treasures, but appreciated also the splendour and gaiety of society made possible by wealth in such a stately setting.

Mrs. Asquith, as brilliant as Lady Blessington, filled a rôle at court long vacant, it having been some years since the Prime Minister's wife had been a social figure. Mr. Balfour was too much wedded to his pianos—feeling compelled to have two in his sitting-room—and wedded to golf, to have had time to choose himself a wife; and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was a widower. Mrs. Asquith was popular with King Edward, and amused him, for, while her husband was thundering in the House, "The Lords are impotent, the Commons are supreme," Mrs. Asquith was cleverly contriving to place the marriageable members of her family among the lords, in company with the one-time Radicals who "foamed as patriots, to subside as peers."

Queen Alexandra was a vision of youth and beauty

unchanged by the passing of the years; such a queen as a king would choose from among all the world to add her loveliness to the stately pageants of his throne—and the last among women to share his heart. Edward set the pace for a more epicurean menu than George III's, who was never happier than when eating boiled mutton and turnips. A London concert became a private performance of operatic stars and virtuosi, shooting parties and week-end country-house gatherings were as costly almost as the royal balls. But while no court in Europe was more elegant and imposing, there was none more democratic and less austere. The King was a friend of the people, and at the same time a thorough aristocrat; a formidable diplomat, and able to manipulate the pawns on the international chessboard with the shrewdest of statesmen, but equally a confirmed *dévot* of pleasure, and a connoisseur in gowns as well as waistcoats; a man of strong passions, and delicate susceptibilities, whose best friends in the days of his power were the men who stood by him before he ascended the throne, and the women who were young with him and whose charms of youth had long since passed.

His appreciation of American women is well known, and during his reign the American ambassador was so thoroughly *persona grata* that it gave all Americans presented there an enviable status they did not receive elsewhere. One met the King often in an informal way, although he achieved the difficult success of close intimacy in his circle without destroying the isolation

of the monarch which monarchy demands. About the only thing that could disturb his good-natured attitude toward his friends was a false move during a game of bridge. One evening his partner played a jack instead of a king, to his great annoyance. "Pardon, sire, but it is so difficult to tell the king from the knave," she said with quick audacity, and was repaid by a hearty laugh instead of a frown at the *faux pas*.

He had the reputation of never forgetting any one he had ever met. But that would have been herculean even for him. I remember when he was being entertained by an American-born hostess who had as her house guest an old friend of her father's, a Civil War veteran and editor. The King noticed him in the drawing-room, and a presentation followed, at which the usual formal speeches were made of mutual pleasure at the meeting. "But it is not the first time I have met Your Majesty," the American said, and the King, much surprised, asked where it had been. "It was in New York in 1860, then in Washington, and I was on the train with you from Washington to Cincinnati," the editor replied. The King advanced a step nearer and laughingly shook his fist in the other's face, exclaiming, "And were you a member of that terrible newspaper gang that dogged my footsteps?" The editor had to confess that he was, and the King, amused, began discussing his American experiences. He had forgotten the editor, but he remembered several beautiful and fascinating girls he had danced with, and enquired about them.

After a few busy seasons under the wing of an *habitué*, you have souvenirs of almost every one of importance in English life. In diplomatic society, French is spoken more than it is in Berlin. The accomplished French ambassador, Monsieur Cambon, has been stationed in London since 1898, but has steadfastly declined to bother to learn English. As Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, has never bothered to learn French, perhaps the *entente cordiale* between the two nations has the better stood the test of time, the diplomatic *pourparlers* having been on the broad and general lines merely of friendship. Sir Edward Grey says that if he had had any idea of becoming Foreign Secretary, he would have applied himself in his youthful educating days to the mastery of French—quite a different boy from Winston Churchill, who said when he put on long trousers that he would have to hurry up with his political career because he was not physically robust. "I have no idea I shall live to be an old man, and I must be Prime Minister before I die," was the way he expressed it.

I remember Churchill (the Englishman) as a young fellow, very much in society when he wished to be—and as any cousin of a duke could be—but an *enfant terrible* to many a hostess, leaving his manners at home when he went out to dine, and apparently some place else when guests came to his mother's house. Shortly after his return from South Africa, he offered to show me his interesting souvenirs of the Boer War. But when we were *en tête-à-tête*, he became so absorbed in discuss-

ing the question of Boer government that I found myself, to my amazement, listening to an oration of three-quarters of an hour. He turned his back upon me, striding over to a long mirror, to deliver it to his own reflection there, with numerous gestures and facial contortions, wheeling around at the finish to say, "It just occurred to me what a capital speech that would make in the House of Commons some day." (This was before he had ever won a seat.) "I wanted to get it fixed in my mind before I forgot it."

But I confess to a genuine admiration of his tremendous power of application and proved ability. His superiority to his cousin the duke is a striking proof of the injustice of the law of primogeniture; and when Marlborough tries to make a speech in the House of Lords, Churchill rushes over from the Commons, wildly "wig-wagging" to him to stop—for the sake of the family prestige. Churchill's marriage was a love match with a penniless girl, who as a débutante of beauty and intellect won many admirers but somewhat tardy suitors, on account of the stories floating around for years about her equally beautiful and intelligent mother. Churchill's own mother, the American, is now close to sixty, but astonishingly handsome, her brilliant dark eyes and supple figure showing the *joie de vivre* of a girl—in spite of the fact that fate has dealt her some hard blows.

Another *enfant terrible*, but of quite a different type, is John Sargent, a greatly sought after dinner guest,

because so difficult to get, his open indifference to the frivolous, pretty women of his canvases being almost as famous as the portraits themselves. A friend of mine, a woman with a deep, thoughtful nature without a trace of coquetry, and a distinguished pianist, had invited me one winter to join her at Venice. Sargent happened to be there, and, as the two had been friends for years, they played duets every evening. He played remarkably well, and it acted upon him like a draught from Lethe's springs, putting to sleep the cold, cynical man of the world whom society knows, and giving me glimpses of rare charm and the undisciplined heart of a boy, his big frame and serious face responding to the call of Wagner's genius with tremulous joy. It was shortly after this that I was in London, and he readily consented to show me over his studios, the one at his house in Tite Street, Chelsea, with a background of furnishings necessary for the dainty, fastidious women who sat to him there; lofty frescoed walls, old rugs, and delicately hued hangings. He opened and shut the door carelessly, and went out as if he were glad to get away; and when I stood in the other studio, I knew it to be the home of his deepest, truest art. It was hidden away in a corner of Chelsea, where no street sign indicated a public place. Not even Sargent's best friends would dare betray its whereabouts without his consent. There was not a rug on the rough floor, only workbenches such as one sees in a carpenter's shop, dozens of knives, chisels, saws, and hammers; and there was a workman smoothing out thin strips of wood and pre-

paring plaster of Paris. It was a studio barren and bare of ornament or beauty, but dedicated to the god of labour and to Sargent's highest aspiration of art-sculpture.

He was charmingly expansive, even communicative, and, when I left, asked me to come again whenever I wished. I did not go again for several years, but one day the impulse was too strong to be resisted, especially as he never appeared in the houses of his friends, his portraits were no longer seen at the Academy, and it was announced that he refused to paint them any more. His assistant, a young Italian with a liquid touch to his broken English, opened the door, and, recognising me at once, admitted me quietly into the room. Sargent was on top of a tall ladder, his coat was off, and he was working furiously with the clay upon a large reredos against the wall. He did not see me at first, but when he did, I began in the confident tone of old acquaintance, "Dear Mr. Sargent, I came to ——." The sentence was never finished, for it was an enraged lion who cast unrecognising eyes upon me, a genius in a paroxysm of arrested inspiration, who thundered out: "How dare you come here?" "John Sargent, how dare you speak to me like that?" I answered back, and then, to my own astonishment and his utter dumfounding, I burst into a torrent of tears. I made for the door, but there the Italian stood entreating: "Please don't go until he has had a chance to apologise. He'll be so sorry if you do." The big man at the top of the ladder had descended, had frantically rushed into an-

other room for his coat, and now stood before me, bowing, with his heels together in the military manner he had learned as a boy in Italy, saying, "Please forgive me for being so rude and irritable. I am sorry, I am very sorry, I am very, very sorry." It would have been ludicrous, if not so charged with sincerity, two middle-aged people standing there acting like children, the woman mopping her inflamed eyes, the man blushing like a schoolgirl, clicking his heels together as he bowed again and again, saying gravely and imploringly, "I am sorry, so very sorry, so very, very sorry." "But why did you do it?" I finally asked, and he answered at once, "Because I am tired to death of people; all I want is to be alone." We shook hands on that, I turned to leave—and he softly closed the door.

After a few days in London I like to go on to some friend's country house, one among the many where leisurely living is the art, especially of the English, and where I can sit before a bright fire in a chintz-covered drawing-room, with rare prints and china on the walls, and let my eyes drink in lovingly the peacefulness of the gardens and smoothly rolled lawns, and the nobility of the big oak and yew trees in the park, encircled with its stone wall or high green hedge.

I am calling to mind among pleasant memories one such visit, which took me up into the hills when all the London world was going northward for the autumn shooting. The "dowager's house" of the duke's estate, where I was staying, was a quaint little mansion, to

which my friend, a childless widow, had retired when a distant cousin had succeeded her husband; its gabled roof peeped out from the ivy, its doors were entwined with clematis, and an enchanting garden led you down by secluded paths to the banks of the river, and then out into the fields and meadows. The cottages in the tiny village about us were embowered in honeysuckle, clematis, or old-fashioned roses, where the bees hummed all the day long, and against the garden walls the plums and apples were trained, hanging ripe and luscious, in purple and golden glory. You had to ring a bell at the postoffice before you could buy a stamp, and in the one grocery shop you might help yourself to all the contents and ring to say good-bye.

The shooting lodge, where the sportsmen were housed, was high above us on the moors, and over a thousand feet above the level of the sea, while the ancient baronial hall of the family, which I had come particularly to see, was a short walk through the fields from our garden. It was in perfect repair, although no longer habitable and suited to modern needs. But a few years before, at Christmas time, the banquet-room had been aglow with light for an old-time feast; great Yule logs were rolled into the fireplace, dogs stretched themselves before it, and servants hurried to and fro, the walls were hung with crimson, and the minstrels' gallery was once more occupied with a band of merry players. At the solid oaken table on the dais, the duke sat as the lord of the feast, with his guests about him, and the steaming boar's head, a huge apple in its mouth, and its

ears entwined with green, was carried in with state and served up with a song; and an old loving-cup of pewter, filled to the brim with spiced ale, was passed along.

At midday, as I looked at it, the Hall stood out clear against the sky, its grey walls freed from the rosy curtain lifted high above it, while at its back the forests rose tier on tier, in vivid, then sombre shades of green, almost black as they met the sky. It was the charm of Nature in her mildest, most pacific of moods, and as I gazed at the place once an impregnable fortress, but now unprotected save by friendly thought, and wandered through its rooms where ladies used to sit over their tapestry frames, or sing softly to the spinet's chords, rooms associated with bygone days of splendour, but bare and deserted now, although guarded by such jealous care—I would always think of some proud beauty, grown tired of caprice and tired of folly, coming at last, in humility and trust, to rest among those who cherished her. In crowded London I was glad of companionship, but here I wanted to be alone. The voice of Nature spoke so clearly, falling upon my jaded spirit like a loved voice of memory from out the years. It spoke so variously, in the woods where my quiet step disturbed the pheasant and the squirrel, fearless and untamed; on the beetling crags of the moors, where the heather waved in bloom, in the meadows where the wind made scarcely a sound as it touched the leaves so gently, and where the crystal water of the river flowed on its winding way to the sea with hardly a ripple that could be heard.

After the shooting party had dispersed and the host was at liberty, the dowager drove me up to the Lodge for a garden party. The road through our village was lively with carriages and motor-cars from every part of the county, and every villager seemed at the cottage windows to see the "gentry" pass. So we chose a circuitous route that wound round and round the hills, until village after village stretched far below us, and the houses and the cattle in the meadows looked like toy things used by a child. A private road through another estate was opened by a little old woman, who emerged from the gatekeeper's lodge and made a succession of curtsies as we passed through; and as we took a secluded drive traversing the park, the fallow deer came close up to the carriage, regarding us curiously with big, tender eyes, while the ground ahead became suddenly alive with rabbits, springing from the grass, with their short tails flashing out.

A red-coated regimental band made a patch of brilliant colour upon the terrace, with the highest peaks of the mountains behind them as a background, and our host himself, as he stood at the entrance to the garden, surrounded by his tall sons and daughters, made a picture I shall not soon forget, his gentle old face aglow with pleasure, his slender figure erect after a long and strenuous life, and his blue eyes as mild as they were keen—such a man as every New-World student should meet, a poet as well as a statesman, and the incarnation of all those kindly English influences of an-



Mrs. Asquith, the wife of the Prime Minister, with one of her daughters

cestry and favoured place, without their arrogance and their vice.

One of the sons took me for a stroll through the gardens, where the guests were sauntering in groups, coldly indifferent to any one else's existence, but with the subdued satisfaction of expression which the most emotionless English countenance assumes under the benign patronage of a duke. It was refreshing to see the girls, not sophisticated young ladies in *coiffures* and trains, but innocent children, with their hair flying over their shoulders, their cheeks like rose petals, themselves as sweet and modest as violets; and boys home from Eton or Winchester, who had the manners of a Chesterfield, and were able to lead their mothers' friends in to the tea-table with the assured dignity of experience in the school of good form. The Church of England clergyman—to be met less and less frequently every year in London society—was omnipresent, in the country still the *beau idéal* of young matrons and tender maidens, an accomplished dinner guest, and an ornament in the ball-room, skilful at golf and bridge. And there was the old-time Conservative Member of Parliament, a personage yet among his own people in the country, a stately oracle, whom it is an honour to meet, representing the traditions of the class that honestly believes Radicals and middle-class Nonconformists can hardly get to heaven except by special dispensation. At Westminster, these days, he is sadly out of place even in his own party, where he feels the

yoke every minute of Joseph Chamberlain's power, "the middle-class upstart," and "the buttonmaker of Birmingham," from whom Lord Salisbury prayed to be delivered.

The most interesting of all to me were the young Englishmen who, after a season or two, avoid the London drawing-rooms, realising that they are but putty in the hands of the experienced women of the world they encounter there, but who fail to captivate their hearts or meet their ideals. To them belongs the young peer in possession of the ancestral home of his fathers, and an entailed estate whose revenue would suffice half a dozen times over for his genuinely simple tastes. Without the light-hearted gaiety of the Latin, which enjoys pleasure for itself, and too unalterably clean-minded to be vicious—he has been everywhere, seen everything, done everything—sucked the orange dry and thrown it away in disgust. But beneath an exterior Greek in its contempt for humility, he has a kind heart and a romantic one, and a code of honour of a Chevalier Bayard. He is the young peer who often marries the chorus girl, whose struggles and courage appeal to him as much as her beauty does, and who surrounds her with such respect and fidelity that womanly virtue, character, and dignity often make a response astonishing to see.

With no stimulus to effort, he is the most *ennui*-ed individual on the face of the earth. Yachting, deer-stalking, watching his racing colours win at Newmarket or Epsom Downs, shooting big game in India or the Rocky Mountains, in a box at the opera, or remodelling

an old palace in Venice, he is equally *blasé* and bored—unless he is needed to fight for his country, when he is transformed into a demon of activity, a dare-devil of courage, and the most splendid of gallant heroes. Six feet of handsome, charming, inaccessible inanity, as exquisite in appearance as a worshipping valet can make him, his monocle drops mechanically from his listless eye, as, with his hands in his pockets, he wanders occasionally into the House of Lords and looks about him with a weary air.

He is the "heavy swell," like unto whom the New York and Newport dandy would so gladly be, and cannot, having inherited along with his millions of dollars the energy and enterprise of the detested middle-class which built them up.

But since Queen Mary came to the throne, I have many times called to mind the county "dowagers" whom I saw at the duke's garden party. For they, young, old, and middle-aged, married or single, belong to the elect in Queen Mary's eyes. They were all-powerful at Queen Victoria's court. But when King Edward came into his own and brought to the court the cosmopolitan society he had long made fashionable away from the court, the party of the dowagers retired to the country, realising that their economically arranged parties would be passed by and their strait-laced notions laughed to scorn. They preferred the aloofness of county homage, where a trailing velvet gown and a modest tiara sufficed for five years of dinners and chaperonage at balls. And in their morning and afternoon dressing

they gloried in monstrosities of taste and battles of colour combinations to flaunt more openly their disdain of the court's smartness. In the country they remained powerful to ignore and condescend, and they had a chance to forget the existence of such a person as Lloyd George, and that he could casually decline invitations from any duke in the realm, being manifestly of so much more consequence!

These great ladies of the old school, some of them, like Queen Mary, young in years, are serene-faced women holding aloof from frivolity and cherishing ideals of high breeding, birth, and position. Among their dependents, they are sympathetic and wisely helpful; pensioning old servants, caring for the sick and the infirm, and regulating the well-being of their tenants with a personal interest one finds no place in the world as in England among their class. They are loyal friends, and one's memories of intimacies with them are of the kind which neither absence nor circumstance seems to affect, and which touch the deepest chords of the heart and intellect—if one can shut one's eyes to the lamp of the inner shrine, which proclaims an imperishable contempt for everything not English.

Under the *régime* of Queen Mary many of the Circes and Sybarites have fled. Those remaining wrap their mantles of the sacred English eleventh commandment—"Thou shalt not be found out"—tightly about them, clutching it with feverish care. And the dowagers have returned to court!

But the rules and regulations of virtuous conduct

have never been the rules and regulations of royal courts. The memories that throng Buckingham Palace, St. James, Windsor, and Hampton Court are of pomp and vanity, license and scandal, the flowers that have always flourished at the courts of kings. Buckingham Palace itself rises upon the site and takes its name from the home of the Duchess of Buckingham, who was James II's daughter by Catharine Sedley, created Countess of Dorchester; while St. James Palace has been the home of as many royal mistresses as it has been of kings—of Mademoiselle Schulenberg, whom George I brought with him from Hanover, and made Duchess of Kendal, as well as the home of Miss Brett, his English common-law wife; of Mrs. Howard, whom George II made Countess of Suffolk; and Miss Vane, who there, in her maid-of-honour room, gave birth to a child by Frederick, Prince of Wales. St. James Square and Park—of how many frail beauties do they speak—of the mansion of Arabella Churchill, the mother of James II's son, the Duke of Berwick, and the stately home of Charles II's Duchess of Cleveland, of Nell Gwynn, the orange girl made Duchess of St. Albans, of Louise Renée de Quérouaille, made Duchess of Portsmouth, and Frances Stewart, Duchess of Richmond, whose face and figure Charles immortalised through the centuries as Britannia on the English coins. All of them and many more like them, founded powerful ancestral houses, in some occasional generations extremely virtuous, but steadfastly in all generations inordinately proud of their bastard royal blood!

One dares to be gently amused even at virtue if it be displayed at the court of kings—and at the great ladies of Queen Mary's court. For if any among them had to choose between contamination by either of the two Radical demagogues, Winston Churchill or Lloyd George, they would unhesitatingly decide upon the first, the cousin of a duke. They believe him to be a political hypocrite, blatant with unscrupulous ambition. Lloyd George may be sincere—but he is of common birth. To be associated with the first would only corrupt their morals—their manners would yet remain unstained.

The new court will be preëminently the court of the Queen. The King is a simple country squire. He has travelled, but not for personal pleasure. The reading of books brings him no thrill of delight. He frankly confesses that he knows and cares nothing about art. The accomplishments of conversation, of dancing and dining, mean nothing to him.

It was early upon the February morning when King George was to open his first Parliament, and I was with an old friend in the crowd around Westminster. We tried to get through and up into the royal gallery, but a burly policeman blocked our progress. "I am a peer," my friend said quietly, but with a certain ring in his voice, and the man pushed the people right and left to make way for us. Once inside, he picked up from a bench, where it had been left for him, a big red bag containing his robes, then we passed the hall where the King and Queen were to sit in state, and he pointed

out the different peeresses already in their places there, looking very grand in their court gowns, jewelled tiaras, and ostrich feathers, and very cold as well, with bare arms and neck. The little gathering of women crowded into the small space of the royal gallery, where the peers may invite their friends for such an occasion as this, made me think for a moment that I was in a late Victorian drawing-room. There are numerous women in London society more important these days than any peeress in leading the mode, but this was not their day, and they were wise enough to stay at home. It was the mustering of mothers, sisters, and cousins of the peers and peeresses, who came to see their relatives pass in triumph, not to try to outshine their rivals. And the old *régime* asserted itself with such evident delight in its return to glory, wearing its old clothes with haughty consciousness, and the *coiffure* "Alexandra," tabooed by fashion long ago, although still worn by Queen Mary and the small coterie among the aristocracy who refuse to be smart.

Mrs. Langtry, in the days when she was the toast of the town and the *chère amie* of King Edward, then Prince of Wales, was hurrying, a tardy guest, one windy night to a large reception, but, forgetting to close the windows of her carriage, she entered the drawing-room with her lovely hair in shimmering riot about her face, and the next day the *coiffure* "Alexandra" was supplanted by the first of the many innovations of dressing the hair. Up in the gallery, that morning, when an elaborate *coiffure* and an unmistakable Parisian

toilette came into view among our members, there was such a levelling of lorgnettes as at an extraordinary apparition.

But the extraordinary apparition to me, as the peeresses swept past us to take their seats near the throne, was that so many among the younger women were alien by birth to the British aristocracy. With three American duchesses, there seemed few among the rest who did not come from English millionairedom of trade, from the United States, or from the variety stage. It was interesting to watch them and see how they took the difficult rôle to which they had not been born. We were all naturally most interested in the ladies of the stage, who have made the dowerless love matches of the peerage, and whom you see only on such occasions as this, almost never at a general gathering of society or at court. Their daughters may be received—but themselves, never.

The Duke of Norfolk came in, wearing robes as ancient as his title, and a smile upon his dark face usually so sombre. He bustled about, whispering directions here and there, and looking responsible for everything, as, indeed, he was. The Lord Chancellor came along to put himself among the others at the door to await the King and Queen, who had already arrived and were in the robing-room. His big head in its judicial wig was imposing, and his robes were held up by an attendant whose struggles made us all smile, as the Lord Chancellor walked very fast, then stopped very short, to speak to various friends. Then there was

Lord Winchester carrying the Cap of Maintenance, gracefully indifferent as from a family accustomed to this hereditary function from generation to generation. And I caught a glimpse of the Crown flashing with big diamonds, the holder's robes nearly falling off his shoulders as he adjusted the red velvet band around his neck, which held the cushion that held the Crown.

The soldiers from the Tower, the "Beef Eaters," formed an aisle up and down the room through which soon marched a body of army officers. An old man in court dress with duchess lace about his wrists and throat, and diamond buckles on his slippers, made me rub my eyes and think I was in another century as he walked past with mincing steps. The boy pages, in their quaint costumes, every one admired, but they kept discreetly at a distance until the King and Queen were ready for them, as English children do. A funny little man in gorgeous uniform, stumbled in, in a dazed sort of way, and was put in his place when the procession was forming, standing there, still dazed and helpless, while the others wandered about, taking their places only at the last moment. A splendid-looking old warrior, his breast covered with medals and orders, was gossiping with a woman friend when another officer drew him away to point out a discovery at the door. And before us all they nearly doubled up with laughter—at a lady's powder puff in a little blue silk bag. If the gallant Edward had been there to come upon the scene, wearing his Order of the Garter, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, he might have again turned feminine embarrassment into

lasting glory, and instituted "The Royal Order of the Powder Puff."

It was getting late, but at last there was a blast of trumpets, every one was on the alert, the great doors were thrown open, and a long procession began marching past us, and finally the King and Queen. They were clasping hands and bowing right and left, as the men saluted and the women dropped low curtseys, the Queen stately and erect, her beautiful figure a worthy setting for the royal gems she wore for the first time, her face somewhat shy and timid, and yet resolute and severe; the King sober and visibly oppressed. They kept step together, but still the Queen appeared to take the lead. I was reminded of the first time I had seen them, years ago, when, as Prince and Princess of Wales, they opened a new public building in one of the London suburbs and afterwards went into the managers' private room to sign the register. The Prince, diffident as usual, was staring around him instead of writing his name, when I heard the Princess whisper, "Buck up, George."

We in the gallery could see very little that was happening in the House of Lords when the King and Queen passed in and took their seats upon the throne, so, after the procession passed, many of us hurried down the stairs lined with soldiers of the Royal Horse Guards, to see the street procession upon its return to Buckingham Palace. Outside there were state coaches galore, with bewigged coachmen, and a formidable array of soldiers, mounted and on foot. The crowd was dense, and, to escape it, I took refuge for a moment in one of the

numerous lanes running through Whitehall to the Embankment. The King's own band, mounted on splendid horses, was playing a lively air to announce his departure. And here, in the lane, the cockney girls were gaily dancing a jig to the music. If the royal musicians had known it, how disgusted they would have been.

XIII

LONDON CITY AND THE SOCIETY OF THE LORD MAYOR AND LADY MAYORESS

The London of "London Town," Park Lane, Berkeley Square, and Carlton House Terrace, of St. James's Place and Buckingham Gate, the London of lineage and Society—Society with a capital S—of fashion and elegance, of the belles and the beaux, correctly domiciled close to the sovereign, and passing its leisured, licensed existence in the often incorrect life about the court—looks upon "London City," that ancient quarter of business presided over by the Lord Mayor, as an unknown region with childish memories of visits to the Tower and St. Paul's Cathedral, a district given over to despicable "trade" where a horde of men from respectable, middle-class, uninteresting Suburbia, descends every morning, feverishly hurrying persons of impossible manners and impossible clothes, who stream in over Westminster, London Bridge, Blackfriars, and Cannon Street, and stream out again every night. It is a place where the sovereign must put in an appearance at least once during the reign in a sort of penance of popularity, and where cabinet ministers and ambassadors accept dinners from people they would never dream of "knowing" as far as Society is concerned. It is a dark abyss from which there has frequently arisen an enormously



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Private garden at Windsor Castle

rich stockbroker or a man who was "something big in the City," who has bought his way into the aristocratic houses and been snubbed in the Park by his dinner guests. It is a vortex into which a democratic and eccentric younger son has sometimes descended when the eldest-born succeeded to the title and estates, and from which he has frequently emerged with a City heiress whose connection with "trade" has been a guilty burden which the family have carried with fortitude and resignation—unless they could triumphantly proclaim that it was the trade which is not "in trade," whose millionaires scorn the Lord Mayor's baronetcy, pose as public benefactors of the nation, and accept from a grateful sovereign their rightful baron's title and a position near the throne—in other words, the all-conquering, the aristocratic Beer!

The London of the "City," the Bank of England, and the Stock Exchange; of the Lord Mayor's residence, the Mansion House, and the Guildhall; where the civic business is carried on, the home of kings and courtiers until the Stuarts sought the green fields and cowslip meadows of modern Belgravia and Mayfair—its old landmarks remain unchanged. Travellers to-day pick their way through the busy crowds where its streets have resounded with the chariot wheels of the Romans, the eagle carried high before their marching columns; and reverberated with the mighty tread of the gallant Crusaders, bearing the banner of the Cross; where royal jousts and tournaments were fought in hot and bloody battle upon the sand thickly spread over the pavements

of stone, the King watching from the side and the Queen high above in the balcony of the church of St. Mary-le-Bow; where an impregnable wall and four fortified great gates around that one wonderful square mile protected the "citizens" who wore the garb of the livery companies or Guilds, and protected the River Thames, filled with their fleets of merchant vessels seeking the ocean paths to Antwerp, to Italy, to the Orient, to bring back the wines and linens of France, the silks and spices of Venice, the gold of Arabia, and the gems of the Nile.

The Guildhall still remains, the walls in the crypt the same as when they withstood the fierce flames of the great fire of 1666, and the banquet-hall carefully preserved, where many a king has come with ceremony and retinue to be feasted with more than kingly opulence while the conduit in Cheapside ran with wine free to all who chose to drink; and where many a king has been a suppliant for money before a beggar boy turned merchant prince—Edward I with his crown to place in pawn, James I and Charles I with the royal jewels of the realm. And when the sovereign at Buckingham Palace follows the example of his predecessors since the far-off days, when Guildhall was built, and punctiliously comes for hospitality and a royal address, with all the trappings of royalty in an important visit of state, he is received with the same pomp and circumstance by City councillors in flowing mazarine gowns, aldermen in scarlet and sable, and a Lord Mayor in his historic blue-black gown half covered with gold lace, a costly

badge of distinction, of which, by act of Parliament, there are only four allowed in the kingdom, for the London Lord Mayor, the Lord Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor, and the Master of the Rolls—and wearing the solid gold collar and jewel of office worn by every Lord Mayor since the reign of Henry VIII, so superb with its magnificent diamonds that many a king must have coveted it for the jewels of his crown. The City trumpeters in their Tudor costume announce the arrival of the royal guests at the Guildhall porch and at the top of the steps, and the Lord Mayor leaves his dais and goes to meet them, with pages to bear his train, attended by his private chaplain and the City Marshal, the mace of civic authority carried before him, and the pearl sword, presented by Queen Elizabeth in the wild days when no man of position ventured abroad without protection.

And the humorous idiosyncrasies of English society disclose themselves to-day at the Guildhall around the Lord Mayor and his court, and at the Mansion House, where he welcomes the condescending great ones of the earth in a succession of luncheons and dinners dazzling in appointment and stupendous in number, the same as when Dick Whittington bought the favour of Henry V by throwing upon the spice-wood fire the King's bonds for a huge sum of money loaned. Lord Mayor Thomas Gresham, equally with Whittington, the hero of London City glory, was a foundling left to die in the meadow, and rescued from starvation by an old woman attracted to the spot by the loud chirping of grass-

hoppers; and he became so enormously rich that his fleet of merchant vessels was as mighty as a royal navy; he acted as stockbroker and Chancellor of the Exchequer to Henry VIII, and supplied funds without stint to that amorous, extravagant monarch; and he built the first Royal Exchange or bourse, which Queen Elizabeth, in 1571, opened by herald and trumpet, coming in state from her palace, Somerset House in the Strand. He was rich enough to have Turkey carpets, when rushes were good enough for the king, and powerful enough to have bankrupted the kingdom. He could have been a Cosmo de Medici, the merchant-banker who founded a dynasty of popes, royal dukes, and queens; a John Fugger, the weaver of Augsburg, whose descendants in Bavaria have feudal lordship to-day over 50,000 dependents. He could have made London City as independent and democratic as Bruges, Ghent, and Yprès, whose burgomasters, when in Paris at the court of John II, haughtily left their costly cloaks of velvet and ermine upon the seats in the banquet-hall, a present to the king, who was too poor—or too careless—to provide cushions upon his seats. But he was content with the title of "Sir," the lowest in the gift of the sovereign, and with seeing his grasshopper emblem surmounting the Royal Exchange. He lived with magnificence at Osterley Park, near London, now the home of the Earl of Jersey, and even to-day one of the finest estates in England; he loaned his town house to Ann of Cleves, when she came to marry Henry VIII, and he imported at great expense a pair of Spanish silk

stockings for Edward VII—leaving the status of the English merchant exactly where it was, and where it still remains, a state of bondage to be despised by a noble sovereign and his noble court, unmindful of the old saying: "If princes and people stark naked should go, who could their gradations of dignity know?"

The Lord Mayor is still the product of middle-class brains and ambition, climbing slowly up upon the City's official ladder, chosen first as alderman for a City ward, and then as high sheriff before being eligible to become Lord Mayor. In these later years the religious barriers of the olden time have been removed. He can be, and is sometimes, a Catholic. And even a Jew may now fill the Lord Mayor's office, taking precedence in the City of all royalty but the sovereign, and at St. Paul's Cathedral taking the throne opposite the Bishop of London, and with precedence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. And he lives in supreme military and civic authority close to the Old Jewry, where the terrible massacres of the Jews began the night of the coronation of Richard Cœur de Lion and continued until there was scarcely a Jew alive in all England—while Richard rode off to the Crusades to rescue from the Saracens the Holy Land, the home of the Jews. The Lord Mayor pays out of his own pocket for sumptuous hospitality generally as much and sometimes even more than the £10,000 of his salary. He is a man of business honour *sans reproche*, and middle-class respectability of the Ten Commandments unimpaired; tenacious of the rights of the City, but not less so of the immunities of rank,

to which he hopes with the Lord Mayor's baronetcy ultimately to attain. He has all the proverbial, traditional English contempt for the middle class, persuaded that the thing universally throughout the centuries in his country proclaimed so despicable, must, perchance, despicable be.

I remember that I had my first glimpse into the society of the City at the Guildhall ball in 1887, in honour of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, when there was such an array of royalty at home and abroad that the West End was ready to know any one who knew an alderman from whom to beg, borrow, or steal a ticket; and I was unimportant enough to be glad of a seat in the gallery below the orchestra, and enthusiastic enough to go down every day for a week to watch the elaborate preparations. Carpenters had been busy there for many a week, connecting outlying buildings to the Guildhall proper, putting down a dancing-floor over the stone one, where traders still come to-day for the authorized measurements of inches, feet, and yards to settle disputes in business transactions; and decorators had hung the walls with velvet and tapestry, and upholstered the rooms as for the home of a king. A squad of policemen kept back the curious ones in the ever-present crowd, who had no sponsors among the rotund, consequential aldermen and councillors who arrived in their carriages and pairs to watch operations, the hanging of flags and banners, the placing of palms and huge flowering plants, rose trees and orchids, and entwining the pillars with wreaths of primroses and violets. The Queen

herself was not there; she had just made her appearance at the Mansion House to commemorate her Jubilee after opening the Queen's Hall of the People's Palace in Mile End Road; but the Lord Mayor proudly took the lead to the supper-room with the Queen of the Belgians, and the Lady Mayoress with the old King of Denmark, father of the then Princess of Wales, now the widowed Queen Alexandra, and followed by King George of Greece, King Leopold of the Belgians, the old King of Saxony, the Prince of Wales (King Edward), the Crown Prince of Portugal (the assassinated King), the old Duke of Cambridge, the Duke of Connaught, the Grand Duke Serge of Russia (who was assassinated), the Princess of Wales, the Crown Princess of Germany (the Kaiser's mother), the Crown Princess of Portugal (the exiled Queen Amélia), the Duchess of Teck (mother of George V's Queen Mary), Princess Christian and Princess Beatrice (Queen Victoria's daughters), the Duchess of Edinburgh and the Duchess of Connaught, and the Queen of the Hawaiian Islands, scarcely forgotten even to-day by the Washington government, a dusky beauty much bejewelled, legally as much a sovereign as any of them, and treated as such. Then came a train of ladies- and gentlemen-in-waiting, of equerries and maids-of-honour, of princes and dukes, of City aldermen, bankers and merchants with their princesses and duchesses of trade. City wealth and display vied with royalty that night, and masculine and feminine royalty vied one with the other with thousands of gems to make a brave showing in a foreign land, in

necklaces, bracelets, and brooches, in jewel-encrusted court swords dangling from the belt, and in the decorations of every court of Europe. There were the jewelled orders of the English Knights of the Garter, the French *Légion d'Honneur*, the Black Eagle of Germany, and the Golden Fleece of Spain, the Knights of the Redeemer of Greece, the Knights of the Sword of Sweden, the Knights of the Tower of Portugal, the Knights of Dannebrog of Denmark, the Scottish Knights of the Thistle, and the Irish Knights of St. Patrick—the whole making a dazzling pageant encircled above by the blazing jewels of the women flashing from crowns, coronets, and tiaras. It was such a dazzling pageant as the world has scarcely seen in the ball-room—and composed of power and grandeur which is, to-day, most of it, after tragedy and sorrow, nothing but dust and ashes and the shroudings of the tomb!

Then I remember that I was at the Guildhall in December, 1901, for the luncheon given in honour of the Prince and Princess of Wales, now the new King and Queen, after their return from India and Australia, on my way there passing through streets hung with flags and bunting, from York House clear up to the Guildhall; and into the Library and the dais of the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, through courtyard and corridors lined with artillerymen, and the members of the London Fire Brigade. Every guest was in the room before the Prince and Princess and their suite and a mounted escort of the Life Guards arrived, the Lord Mayor with his suite, with the sheriffs and an imposing

reception committee at the door to meet them, and the City trumpeters breaking upon the dead silence of expectancy with thunderous, ear-splitting blasts. They were escorted inside and up to the dais of the Lady Mayoress, the trumpeters marching before, and the Princess accepted a huge bouquet of mauve and white orchids from the Lord Mayor's daughter. The Town Clerk loudly called for silence—there was scarcely a whisper which he could have heard—and the Recorder read a loyal address, which he handed to the Lord Mayor, who handed it to the Prince, who handed it to his equerry—who probably thoughtfully misplaced it before the day was done. The Prince replied, assuring the Lord Mayor, the Lady Mayoress, the sheriffs, the aldermen, the councillors, and the guests that he was delighted to be there, and appreciated the honour, his kind, honest face and handsome eyes full of sincerity and gentle pleasure, while the Princess smiled her characteristic, stereotyped, emotionless smile. From the Library they were escorted into the Guildhall proper, with the City trumpeters, the Lord Mayor, the Sword Bearer, the Mace Bearer, the City Marshal, and the forty members of the reception committee to show them the way; and every one had lunch with all the formalities and traditional rites of City ceremony. Some of the greatest men of the Empire were there, Lord Salisbury as Prime Minister, portly and pompous, with the brow of a giant intellect and the haughty glance of a feudal lord; Joseph Chamberlain, his Colonial Secretary, whom he detested personally as an upstart, but

dared not ignore, a merchant like every other English merchant, happiest when not reminded of the fact, his eyes shrewd and fearless, the face even then sickly and aging, the monocle and the orchid boutonnière precisely in the same position as for the last forty years; Lord Rosebery, fastidious in manner and in dress; the eighty-year-old Canadian, Lord Strathcona, to-day over ninety, as unpretentious and genial as when he was a poor Scotch lad, with his fortune and his honours all to achieve; John Morley, with more of the student's æsthetic face and manner than the lawgiver's; and Leopold de Rothschild, typically a banker and typically a Jew. The hall was filled with tables filled with guests of importance, the toilettes and jewels of the women made a splendid spectacle alone; and the men, of course in levée dress, army uniform, the scarlet robes of the aldermen, or the blue of the common councillor. After luncheon there were toasts, to which the Prince, Lord Salisbury, Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Rosebery, and the Lord Mayor responded, and in which even the most casual foreigner would have felt the divine fire of empire building, which the genius of Salisbury fostered, and the genius of Chamberlain would have led to triumph if the fates had been more kind to him in their priceless gift of health. Then the Prince and his suite, with the Prime Minister and an *entourage* of statesmen, went into the Library for coffee and cigars; and the Princess and her suite, with the Lady Mayoress and her suite, went into the Guildhall Art Gallery, transformed into a drawing-room, where they

had coffee, and where the Prince joined them to take leave of the Lord Mayor, the Lady Mayoress, and the loyal citizens. After they were gone, intimate friends of civic sovereignty rushed in to sit in the chairs upon which royalty had just sat, to smell the flowers they had deigned to smell, to finger the solid gold spoons with which they had stirred the cup; then everybody drove home through streets packed with people kept back by hundreds of policemen, trying to face the gaze of the populace with an air of *sang-froid,* as if lunching with royalty were a commonplace thing of the every day.

But it was a compatriot, one of the few American women who have married into the rich *bourgeoise* of England, who led me deep into the romantic world represented by the picturesque offices handed down unchanged through the centuries, and gave me an intimate *entrée* into the society of the City. As I review to-day my memories of a hundred or more festivities, there is still the feeling which I had at the time in each one of them, as of a journey into another land, in closing the carriage-door at Mayfair and opening it before the Guildhall or the Mansion House—and the remembrance of the remark I heard as a young girl from a fascinating young rake in the Guards, that "London was comfortably big enough for any one to lead a double life!" I remember, too, that the first time I was the Lord Mayor's guest at the Mansion House was for the most important affair of the year, the Easter banquet, and that we met as perfect strangers, he having sent me the

invitation card through the influence of my compatriot upon the demand of an alderman who had the ancient right to bring a certain number of women friends. "Coaching orders" they are still called, although the Lord Mayor no longer sends a coach to fetch the lady and take her home. There were nearly four hundred of us, members of the diplomatic corps, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and numerous officials of the London hospitals, for the Easter season has always been associated in the City with the institutions for the care of the sick; and all making first our appearance in the Grand Saloon, where the tapestries hang, woven upon the looms of Old Windsor, commemorating the visit of Queen Victoria to the Mansion House in 1887. The doors at the back were quietly opened, and that famous individual, "Wynnie," the head butler of thirty or more administrations, came in and said, "Dinner is served, my lord." The Lord Mayor gave his arm to the Archbishop's wife, and he his arm to the Lady Mayoress, and the procession wended its stately way, led by the City Marshal, a regular army officer in military uniform of scarlet and gold, with the Mace Bearer and the Sword Bearer, and the Lord Mayor in his most royal of civic robes, and the diamond badge of office, made up of the rose, shamrock, and thistle in gorgeous gems, encircled by the City motto "Domine, Dirige Nos," in two or three hundred diamonds.

The dinner was laid in the Egyptian Hall, where all the banquets are held, a nobly proportioned room in ex-



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The Yeomen of the Guard or "Beef Eaters," in costume of Henry VIII, the regular guard at the Tower of London, but a part of the ceremonial pageants of the state balls, the opening of Parliament by the King, etc.

ecrable taste of mural decoration, with a vaulted roof and two rows of lofty columns, and a stained-glass window representing the signing of Magna Charta filling one of the end walls. It is lighted from the outside, and that evening shed a dozen soft shades of colour upon the head table, challenging the rosy glow from the immense silver candelabra, six of them, each with six branching arms; and along the sides of the cone-shaped figure, formed by the other tables which carried the same scheme of candelabra and shaded branching candles. The dining-room was *en fête* with masses of flowers, and gold and silver plate and shining crystal, and there seemed to be a regiment of tall footmen in gala livery of powdered hair, velvet coats, white knee-breeches, silk stockings, and big, buckled shoes, the Lord Mayor's two personal lackeys behind his chair and that of the Archbishop, the Lady Mayoress's behind her chair, and those belonging to the aldermen behind their chairs—looking very grand and getting in the other servants' way,—and those waiting at table moving noiselessly in and out under the direction of Wynnie, without whose thin, severe elegance in grey side whiskers and black coat, the Mansion House would be an unfamiliar place.

Instead of the usual glass finger bowls, we had gold dishes with rosewater, one for each table, bearing inscriptions that they had been presented by former Lord Mayors, beginning in the days when glass was more rare and costly than gold, and Wynnie offered a snuffbox to each of the men, another relic of the byegone days.

There were toasts, of course,—the ghosts of the City Fathers would turn in their graves if there were a Mansion House banquet without toasts—and the loving-cups were sent down the tables, filled with spiced wine immemorially termed "sack." My immediate host, the alderman, said that this custom dated from Queen Elfrida, who had her husband, King Edward, assassinated while draining his wine-cup at the banquet board—and that ever after there was a sacred law in England that a man should be immune from attack while drinking with his friends.

Other years followed when, during the few weeks I generally managed to spend in London every season or two, the Lord Mayor was an acquaintance, and I was an eager partaker of civic hospitality; and then one year, when I stayed my wanderings for a considerable time, I discovered that the incoming Mansion House host was an old friend. I did not arrive in time to witness the ceremony of his election, when the gallery at the Guildhall is generally crowded with ladies watching the thousands of members of the Guilds come to choose two among the twenty-six aldermen eligible to the office, to send in to the aldermen to choose the one and leave the other, sitting in state in their gilded chamber, with the door locked and the City Marshal on the outside, his sword before the big keyhole—and every one outside in the hall knowing beforehand which will be the one! They cheer him gallantly when he appears on the left-hand of the Lord Mayor to make a dignified promenade down the historic hall, have the chain of the new of-

fice put around his neck, and ride off in the gilded state coach to the Mansion House to lunch. But I arrived in time for Lord Mayor's Day, the ninth of November, when, rumour hath it, the new Lord Mayor lies awake all night for the rapturous moment of the first greeting from his valet's lips, "Good-morning, MY LORD." It is the day when he drives in state, about two o'clock, from the Guildhall to the Law Courts for official recognition before the Lord Chief Justice, and in the evening presides at the Guildhall banquet, invariably attended by the Prime Minister and the Cabinet—a day which yearly passes with the languid, supercilious notice of Mayfair and amid the wild excitement of the cockneys.

The pageants associated with this day have practically passed into oblivion with their heterogeneous crowd of attendants made up of liveried servants and Roman lictors, crusaders, and dancing satyrs; and the Guilds attended by citizens dressed to represent their trade. The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress no longer go in barges on the River Thames to Westminster, as they did for centuries, up to 1857, when the supreme control of the Thames passed out of the hands of London City; and for many recent years the Lady Mayoress has not been included in the procession, although she used to be escorted from her residence to the Guildhall by a guard of honour, in a carriage drawn by four horses and preceded by the City officials and the Scots Greys.

Upon this particular ninth of November, when my

friends took up their rôles, a private carriage called for the new Lord Mayor about ten o'clock in the morning to take him to the Guildhall, where the procession to the Law Courts was formed. The bells of the City rang out their greeting, and a dozen brass bands kept up the merry din as, accompanied by the aldermen and the Corporation in their own carriages, he took his first ride through the crowded streets, decorated in his honour, sitting in the gilded state coach, drawn by six horses, his private chaplain beside him, the Sword Bearer and the Mace Bearer upon the seat opposite, and the City Marshal in front upon horseback; the old coach, which cost something like £1,000 in 1757, and has cost about £100 a year for repairs ever since, lumbering along under the guidance of the bewigged fat coachman—who always gets a tip of a guinea upon this occasion—and with two lackeys riding behind upon the rumble—who get a guinea between them as a tip. It is a gentle way of "breaking in" the new magistrate to the delightful prerogative of his year of office, when he signs his name about 30,000 times, and generally pays out of his own pocket some £10,000 for the privilege.

The Lady Mayoress stayed at home until about five o'clock, answering a few among the hundreds of letters and telegrams of congratulation. Her six maids-of-honour for the banquet that night, daughters of her husband's civic friends, had long ago been chosen, and their costumes designed, and her own court dress to be worn again later, when presented to the Queen, had been for several days spread out in one of the guest

chambers, with every detail complete. I saw her for a few moments in her private room at the Guildhall before she went down to take her position upon the dais in the Library, the maids-of-honour buzzing about in excitement, and the lady's-maids setting the dresses right and arranging the trains before the long mirrors which lined the room. She was a gentle, refined woman, a "lady" by the canons of American life, although without lineage, and therefore not, according to the English. But for that one year she would take precedence of the Princess of Wales within the boundaries of the City, and at court would rank as the wife of an earl. I dropped her a curtsey, with a "Good-evening, my Lady Mayoress," to which she replied, with a bright smile full of tender humour and with some happy tears in the eyes, "I have known for years that this night would come, but now I feel for all the world just like a little Cinderella transformed by a fairy wand."

Her husband, a man of powerful build with the broad, low shoulders and short muscular neck, the markings of endurance and passion, and the strong jaw of the fighter, did not belong to that small aristocracy of City wealth and privilege where son has succeeded father in the business firm and the Lord Mayor's chair, but had made his own way up, beginning at ten to support his mother, an errand boy in the business where he was now a white-haired partner. To the casual eye his face was cold and hard, and men seldom attempted to cheat him. But a crying child upon the street would have known at once that he was a friend, and in the quiet circle of his

home his eyes were often lighted by the dreamy fire of imagination, the vision of the poet, but not less so of the self-made man. He stood upon the dais in the Library, where the arched ribs of the roof are supported by the coats-of-arms of the twelve great Guilds commemorating the dignity of trade, behind him the stained-glass window bearing the emblems of the dyers, pewterers, butchers, barbers, carpenters, and other lesser Guilds; with Milton and Stow, representative of the City's literary glory, upon one side, and Whittington and Gresham, of its merchant glory, upon the other. The trumpeters announced the arrival of the Prime Minister, and he and his Cabinet made their way up to the dais, deferential and ingratiating, coming as every Cabinet of every king is glad to come to the Guildhall to seek the City's support and confidence and the prestige which it gives the Government before the world. The Prime Minister gave his arm to the Lady Mayoress, and the procession made its way into the banquet-room. Ladies and gentlemen from every rank of society and political distinction were there, foreign ambassadors and peers, the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General, the Cabinet in their Windsor costume of dark-blue and gold braid designed by the Prince Consort, and far from handsome, but the whole picture, as the nine hundred guests were seated at table, one of extraordinary brilliance. Upon high stools at either end were the immense "barons of beef," each weighing about 150 pounds, carved according to ancient usage by officials appointed to this delicate task. The upper gallery, sup-

ported by the giant figures of Gog and Magog, which used to adorn the old pageants, was given over to the orchestra, but the lower gallery was full of spectators, while the small one overlooking the head table was used for the maids-of-honour, who have their dinner in a private room, and then appear in the gallery, their bouquets hanging over the railing.

When the Lord Mayor lifted up the loving-cup to start it upon its rounds, I saw that his eyes had a softened, far-away look. It was the supreme moment of his life, the one moment for which he had spent years of sacrifice and struggle. And I knew that he had forgotten the famous room, with its monuments to Chatham, Canning, and Wellington, its pervading air of romance and history, and its ghosts of the Black Prince, Lady Jane Grey, and Bloody Mary; had even forgotten that throng of powerful men whom any king would have been proud to welcome at his board—and that he longed for his mother who, many years since, had folded her tired hands in eternal peace, and saw himself a hungry, shivering little errand boy, running about Fleet Street and Cornhill, always listening for the sound of the bells from St. Mary-le-Bow, and hearing in their sweet tones the same message they gave Dick Whittington, "Turn again, Lord Mayor of London!"

Mansion House corner is one of the noisiest and dirtiest in all noisy, dirty London. The fine sculpture over the front portico, representing the goddess of the City trampling upon her enemies, is so begrimed as almost

to be defaced, and so continues year after year. But every November the Corporation tries to make the interior spotlessly new and clean, from the kitchens in the basement, with ranges big enough to roast an ox, and stewing-tanks laid down over a series of furnaces, up to the Lord Mayor's enormous state suite, with its handsome fittings in bathroom and dressing-room. The Lady Mayoress commands the decorations and alterations in the private rooms on the second floor, the breakfast-rooms, the dozen or more bed-rooms, the billiard-room, but especially in the boudoir, the one particular spot of home in the barn-like palace. This, my friend, greatly daring, had entirely in white, ordering herself the white flowers which were every day fresh in the vases and bowls, and making it all the year look to me like a ball of unsullied snow in the midst of a coal mine. She brought her own linen, china, and silver for the breakfast, the one meal the family had in private, and her own staff of servants, supplemented by men and maids whom she, or, rather, Wynnie, could depend upon. The ordinary livery and the gala livery, which is good enough for the household of a king, must be new with each new Lord Mayor, as the servants claim them as perquisites at the end of the year—silk stockings, cocked hats with gold bands, velvet coats, and everything else, the background of magnificent flunkeyism which inspires reverential awe in the untutored soul; and, with the tax levied upon liveried servants, together with the generous wages and unstinted food and drink of a millionaire's office, costs the Lord Mayor between two and three

thousand pounds—and answers in part the question one hears constantly among the ignorant: "Where does all the money go?"

Wynnie is invariably retained, although his post is no sinecure. I told him one day that he ought to retire and write his memoirs. And what secrets he could tell! Exactly how much is eaten and drunk under the time-honoured phrase, "eats like an alderman and drinks like a fish." How many and how tempting were the bribes offered by various young "swells" of the Piccadilly Clubs to be disguised as dining-room footmen when beauty and the drama, several years ago, lunched at the Mansion House. How many requests does each Lord Mayor have, to change the whole personnel of the Bank of England, the Mint, St. Paul's Cathedral, and the Royal hospitals, from obsequious guests whispering between the courses into the ear of Wealth and Power. What is the difference in the expression upon the faces of the outgoing and the incoming Lord Mayors when the head butler announces for the last time to the one and the first time to the other, "Dinner is served, MY LORD." But Wynnie was not to be seduced into the path of fortune and memoirs. He told me, with his gentle smile, that he would prefer a little cottage in the country and a garden full of roses.

The everyday catering for the establishment was arranged for in advance from the firm of caterers which has served the Mansion House almost as long as it has stood, which gave to it a Lord Mayor in 1814, and whose little shop in Cornhill is among the relics of the

district. They supplied a regular *chef* with his own staff, who early every morning sent up the menus for the day by the housekeeper. For the official banquets and balls, there was a separate *chef* and a separate kitchen staff. A member of the firm would come for the order, and they supplied everything but the plate and the wine. This last, the Lord Mayor had laid in long ago, with the certainty before him of needing it in due course of time, sending in consignments of special brands chosen with the utmost care, regardless of expense, and locked up in his own vault among the miles of wine cellars underneath the house—sharing the basement with the wretched creatures imprisoned in the cells, as in the dungeons of the feudal castles, awaiting trial before the Lord Mayor when the morning dawned.

The daily round of the Mansion House, as I knew it so intimately that year, went with as much regularity for my friends as for the City policemen on duty, one of whom every hour of the day and night had to press a peg in the clock in the Egyptian Hall, with only three minutes of grace for delay. However late they were kept up by official parties, they had to be up early the next morning to meet the multitude of engagements made weeks in advance; the valet and the lady's-maid in charge of wardrobe-rooms at the top of the house, where civic robes in violet and scarlet, velvet court costume with frills of lace, and feminine dress for every conceivable function, were in constant use. The Lady Mayoress attended to her own mail after breakfast, weeding out some fifty or more begging letters

which, with a feeling of hopeless impotence, she despatched down to the Justice Room clerk, who administers the too well known "poor box." The private secretary, Sir William Soulsby, who has served successive Lord Mayors since 1875, was a regular guest to lunch, with the private chaplain, who has his own suite of rooms at the Mansion House and a personal servant, the City Marshal, the Sword Bearer, the Mace Bearer, and the Justice Room clerk, a small suite compared to that which the Lord Mayor of the ancient time had to welcome daily to his board, some twenty-five persons whose dinner was stipulated to cost not less than £2, with as much wine as they cared to drink. During my friend's *régime*, places were always laid in addition for a dozen or more guests, from all classes and occupations, from the Viceroy of India to an Australian cricketer or a veterinary surgeon who was an authority upon cattle disease. There were the leaders of every social, philanthropical, and charity movement under the English sun and fog, and a multitude of clergymen, from the Bishop of London to the struggling young curates preaching the several sermons to be given in the City until the Day of Doom, because provided for in perpetuity in the by-gone days, in memory of the delivery of the English nation from the Gunpowder Plot and the Spanish Armada! In the course of the year, some 25,000 people passed in and out for lunch, dinner, or tea, and there was scarcely a week without some sort of a public gathering in the Egyptian Hall, in all of which the Lord Mayor and Lady

Mayoress had to lend their presence upon the platform and head the subscription.

There were many regular dinners, luncheons, and balls coming in the routine of the year's work, for the aldermen and the common councillors, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, the Lord Chief Justice and the judges, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops. But the children's fancy-dress ball, which comes shortly after Christmas, was the happiest and most charming party of the year, and we had a merry time getting ready for it, with a number of young men friends to act as stewards with long white wands, to marshal the partners, selecting the very tiniest to lead the grand march past the dais, and seeing that the little people who had green tickets for that particular supper hour went in at the proper time, the blue at another, the yellow and white when they were expected; and that the Punch and Judy show, the conjurer and the photographer in their different rooms, had their delightful mysteries revealed.

I remember that the Lady Mayoress went to countless meetings at institutions connected with the City, to the Ragged School, the London Hospital, the Guildhall School of Music, where there was the inevitable little girl to present the inevitable big bouquet; and that I was often in the Lady Mayoress's "Closet" at St. Paul's, up some funny little steps behind the choir, and close to the Lord Mayor's throne. But I was most useful when she needed an unattached friend to pass the evenings with her when her husband went alone to

numerous men's dinners, and to the banquets of the wealthy old City Guilds, upon which something like £100,000 is spent every year, mammoth orgies of eating and drinking which Thackeray described as "monstrous belly worship."

It was a peculiar sensation which invariably seized me as, late at night, we would sit alone up in the boudoir, and I realised that I was miles away from the habitations of my friends. There was never a blade of grass in the neighbourhood, and a rosebush in its smoky air and dusty soil would soon have become as dead as the ancient ones of the Temple Garden hardby, where the adherents of the Houses of York and Lancaster plucked their white and red badges in the War of the Roses. Underground railways from every district of the metropolis rumbled away, and the noise of the traffic never ceased. But Wellington's equestrian statue looked down only upon banks, upon the Bank of England, which is the guardian of some £23,000,000 in gold and bullion, upon the Mint where it is coined, the Stock Exchange, where it is bartered back and forth, with nods and careless words, upon rows of banks among which, it is said, a million pounds in trade or paper changes hands every working-day—upon the streets of a Midas kingdom that could literally be paved with gold!

The year drew to a close, and the eventful hour of hours arrived. The Lord Mayor was made a baronet.

A few days later we were on the train speeding up

to the North, where I had a lifelong friend, a university professor of Latin, who had disappeared from the busy haunts of men to enter the service of a distant relative, an earl, whose old books and property deeds he had spent years in arranging and deciphering, receiving a little cottage in the country, £100 a year, and the title of "antiquarian." London had not seen him for a quarter of a century, but the historical societies often appealed to his wisdom, and the "Peerage" would never have thought of disputing his information upon lineage. The Lord Mayor's name was, in itself, one of the best and oldest in England, a family proud of an ancestress who had been the mistress of a king, but never accepting a marriage out of its class. He had heard vaguely that his grandfather had eloped to Gretna Green with a farmer's daughter, and been disowned. The Lord Mayor wanted to see the Antiquarian. He spoke to me about it with a slight embarrassment, but it was something of which he was not ashamed. "I have known the power and the prestige of wealth, now I want its poetry, for myself and for my son," was the way he had expressed it. And I had understood.

It was in a tiny, odorous parlour that we met the Antiquarian. He came in hesitatingly, blinking his short-sighted eyes for better recognition; his face seemed very red, but I knew he was only blushing! A wide forehead, always white, no matter how red the face became, projected over shaggy grey brows and clear blue eyes, soft and shy you thought them at first, but in truth they were keen and observant as a deer's at bay.

The face and head were odd in shape, with a prominent nose and a delicate mouth, which its owner had tried to hide with a moustache and to guard with a quizzical smile, like a sentinel, to mislead the enemy. Over his shoulders, stooped from many hours spent over manuscripts, a shabby coat hung loosely, almost like a monk's robe. He held in his hands my letter just received, explaining the object of our visit, and the long, slender fingers clasped one another nervously over the paper, as, for a moment, he stood silently regarding the Lord Mayor.

They were like solitary inhabitants from different planets: the one in his threadbare coat, austere, ascetic, with an air of the *hauteur* of class; the other, whose diamond cravat pin was more than equal to the cottage and its contents, and the garden land in which it lay, standing with his strong hand upon the back of a chair in the unconscious attitude of command, a man of sixty whose blood still beat fast and furious with the youthful joy of living and the conqueror's joy of battle, his strong face, with its lines of achievement, prosperity, and practical sense turned squarely forward, the steely eyes in their coldest glance of scrutiny and judgment.

The Antiquarian led the way up to his den on the top floor, reached by crooked stairs very steep and old, and he was soon showing us a pile of old charters he was at work upon, musty pieces of ancient sheepskin covered with exquisite monastic lettering as fine as

print, and, to him, as legible. Hanging by slender strips were seals of wax, stamped often with the royal marks of King Stephen, King John, or Henry VII. He read them off quite glibly, referring once in a while to the dictionaries for an obsolete word. Failing to get assistance there, he "dug it out" himself. He scoffed at the idea I humbly advanced that he must have spent years under some celebrated master of this particular study. "What I know about antiquity and antiquities, my friend, is not to be learned from teachers or books. There are the muniments, here are the documents, you must decipher them yourself." When he spoke, his nervousness vanished. He had the boldness of the authority, the decision upon mooted questions of the investigator, the enthusiasm of the lover.

The charters were too precious to be long on view; as carefully as a mother would lay her babe to rest did he put the box away and lock it up. Then he piled upon the table bulky volumes containing his memoranda of the Earl's muniments, in which the lettering bade fair to rival the work of the monks themselves, and then volume after volume of family history, architectural descriptions, critiques, and essays. From the depths of his capacious cupboard he produced etchings and photographs in illustration which he had gathered from the bookstalls of London, and some even from France. At the very last he brought out his most cherished possession, his history of the principal village of the Earl's estate, and its connection with the nation's history, written on foolscap through five hundred pages. It

was ready to be bound without printing, and would have no duplicate. It had been a labour of love for ten years.

The maid brought us up some tea, but he forgot to touch it—he always forgot it. I forgot mine, because I was studying his face with affectionate solicitude, noting that he seemed greatly aged since last we had met, and, with a sudden throb of pain, I doubted if the dear old Antiquarian would be there when I came again, after a voyage to and fro across the sea. The Lord Mayor, who had transacted his business downstairs, had scarcely spoken upstairs in the den, and he, too, was forgetting his tea, a thing I had never known him to do before. He sat near the window facing the brilliant garden, where a circular lawn laid its velvety carpet in extensive lines for such a modest dwelling. A high stone wall screened it securely from view, but we could see over it to the river, sinuous and silent, broad paths along its banks, which its lovers had made. Its white stone bridge crossed it on the crest of a hill just beyond the garden wall, and other hills, rising proudly and falling deep into narrow valleys, stretched in the distance till they met the forests and the moors, and were lost in the sky. Hill, forest, and moor were wrapped in purple clouds, enveloped, but not obscured, as the pungent greens came forth, just a tinge of purple clinging to them. And even as we looked, the sunset came out above it all, sending out rosy drifts to edge the purple with lines of fire, while the radiant ball sank gently to earth. He gazed out upon it, then back into

the little room upon the old Antiquarian, absently stirring his tea and lovingly fingering his manuscript-book.

He looked at his gold watch hastily, snapping it shut, which aroused the Antiquarian from his reverie. "We must hurry to catch our train," the Lord Mayor said, apologising with something like agitation in his voice. He carefully adjusted my furs, for we were starting out for a long autumn evening journey, and turned up the sealskin collar to his coat. He was silent in the train until we had nearly reached London again. Then he said, with a sigh, "I wonder which of us has chosen the better part, and if I wouldn't choose his, if I could do it again?"

XIV

AMERICAN MONEY IN EUROPEAN SOCIETY

Society is a game everywhere, as every one knows, the same as the steel business is a game, or as marriage is a game, and in Europe society is a game played by the best and brainiest of the men and the most intellectual as well as the most fascinating of the women, a game worth the time, patience, and money of any one.

It was inevitable that the great surging tide of American life and ambition, especially in these later years of enormous prosperity, unobstructed by internal war, national poverty, or class discontent—it was inevitable that it should sweep in tumultuous, mighty waves upon the shores of Europe, inexorably drawn by Europe's Old-World loveliness and repose, the dignity and gentleness of its daily life, its *allure de noblesse.* It was a thing written in a giant's hand on the Book of Fate.

In describing the social glories of present-day society in Europe, what chronicler can omit the history of the American invasion, their entertainments not excelled in the homes of the princes of the blood royal, the American-born duchesses and countesses who congregated at court, presenting a wondrous array of diamond tiaras, ropes of pearls, ruby necklaces, and stomachers of em-

eralds—a phalanx of Money that overshadowed and overawed.

Who expects to find an English family of the old nobility moving these days into Park Lane, or a Frenchman setting up his household gods in the Parisian quarter of American millionaires, the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne?

Who expects now to find an ambassador at any capital in Europe who lives more splendidly and entertains as much and as splendidly as have certain Americans? "The Corps is designated these days as the American Ambassador and the rest of us," are words spoken softly, but none the less bitterly, by many a diplomat when on leave and back at his own court. And while the secretaries of other ambassadors live in an apartment as feudal retainers under the roof of their chief, the secretaries of the American take their own houses, have their own retinues, and maintain a social leadership to which the others do not aspire.

If you are an opera-goer in London, you will see at different times almost the whole of the diplomatic corps in ordinary seats on the ground floor, arriving unnoticed from their—in comparison—modest dwellings in Belgravia and Mayfair. It is the man from the United States, living in a palace imposing enough for a king, who takes his seat in the best box in the house, while officials and lackeys pass the word along: "Make way for the American Ambassador." His German colleague, with a house in Carlton House Terrace, has a stately

mansion, but he shares it with his secretaries and the embassy offices; while the famous Albert Gate House of the French Embassy is far from the small radius which any American ambassador would choose to consider a proper place to live.

But there is no more absurd illusion in existence than the idea that Americans were ever really welcomed into the inner circle of court life in any monarchial country, or that American women ever conquered there by beauty, charm, or intellectual gifts alone. Had they been as beautiful and conscienceless as Helen of Troy, as masterful and versatile in enchantment as Cleopatra —what would it have availed among women, the arbiters of recognition? Would not these very gifts of fascination arouse jealousy and the desire of revenge?

No, no, they had to bring money, more of it than their rivals could muster, and spend it more ingeniously, more amazingly, than their rivals dared.

Those among them who are to-day landed in the haven of refuge, who were so preëminently powerful in King Edward's circle, calmly recognised this fact, and owed their success to their ability to play the game according to the rules—to give something that was wanted —to buy in the coin that would be accepted—rules of any game imposed by that always-to-be-obeyed old master, Human Nature.

The most *recherché* dinner among the many given in honour of the late King Edward at Biarritz was Mrs. Potter Palmer's, when the dozen guests around the table

merrily picked their own cherries from dwarf Japanese trees imported from the Orient especially for that occasion, and costing one hundred dollars each. No one but an American would have thought of such a thing, and, thinking of it, no one but an American would have paid for it.

If you can, in fancy, lift yourself above the housetops of active participation in affairs, and with a detached and philosophical attitude, survey the movement and development of American social conquest in Europe—what is Money but the symbol and instrument of conquest, and the only one that could be used?

In Europe aristocracy, prudently fortified by wealth, has always condescended to everything but itself. The old painters, portraying the triumphant death of a saint, would indicate the degree of holiness and its recognition, by the number of royal personages in the death chamber. One of the celebrated abbesses of the mediæval church is represented breathing her last while no fewer than six royal ladies, their crowns on their heads, stand over her bed, giving her humble eyes an enraptured foreshadowing of that Heaven to which her soul is speeding. When the Romans acknowledged the supremacy of Grecian culture, by taking away to Rome its marvellous treasures, they did not at the same time grant equality to the Greeks, but led them in chains to grace their triumphs, or made them suffer inhuman wrongs as galley slaves. From the time of Dante and Shakespeare, of Michelangelo and Rubens, down to the present day, intellectual gifts and achieve-

ments have, in Europe, bowed the knee in homage to aristocracy entrenched behind a bulwark of riches.

It is within the experience of the present generation in England that the few men of the nobility who devoted their lives to the study and practice of medicine were ostracised, sometimes disinherited by their families, as having brought disgrace upon an unblemished name; while to-day it would not be difficult to count a score of peeresses who would not allow a clergyman or a university professor to sit in a carriage with them except on the opposite seat, and who would gladly place these custodians of learning below the salt at the dinner-table if they dared.

It is an introduction to Royalty which a German professor accepts as the crowning reward of his life, meekly thankful for an honour which his wife is not allowed to share with him, of jostling the fashionable mob in palaces whose owners may not possess one tithe of his learning, but who never accept him as an equal or deign to cross his own threshold.

Thus, when it came to pass that Americans sought personal recognition in Europe, how else could they get it except to buy it, and not in the coin of culture, but of cold cash? What else could they have brought that Europe would have accepted for admittance into the inner citadel? Lineage—we did not possess it. The culture of the Grecian Golden Age—of what would it have availed to-day in Europe at court, in reality, any more than in Rome two thousand years ago?

I have never yet passed a season in the cosmopolitan society of London, Paris, or Rome, where Americans are so victoriously *en évidence*, without being startled in my complacency of national conquest by hearing some one say, surveying me or a compatriot with a bewildered, puzzled air of newly-acquired conviction, "You are the first American I have ever known; if they all are as refined and cultivated, I should like to know some more!"

Benjamin West, a little Quaker boy from Pennsylvania, succeeded Sir Joshua Reynolds as President of the English Royal Academy, and was buried with national honours at St. Paul's Cathedral; John Sargent is the best portrait painter of the world, and Pierpont Morgan is one of the most discriminating and distinguished collectors ever known—but I have seen all over Europe, in art journals and above art shops, such advertisements as: "To Americans and Connoisseurs." It is but one among many evidences that what culture we do possess, Europe in general does not accept seriously. And *en passant*, to be gently satirical at our own expense, money, not culture, was the magician's key, and the only one to be forged which we ourselves could have presented in Europe with any confidence of ultimate success. What does success mean to us as a nation unless "it pays"? How many men and women there are among us who have written great books and conceived great thoughts, but who find themselves in an old age of poverty, of infinitely less consequence than the rich old farmer who has not read a book

for forty years, and who spends the closing days of his life sitting on his back porch chewing tobacco and throwing corn to his chickens!

It can readily be seen with what alarm, almost consternation, the custodians of monarchial society have viewed the American success. For they stand for everything monarchies dare not countenance, if they wish to maintain their own balance of power. Self-preservation is the first law of nature. Institutions built upon the foundation stone of class privilege and the rights of lineage cannot be expected to welcome the element of democracy, that, grown now to such enormous power, has already, through its indirect influence upon their own people, brought so much of threatening disaster and annihilation. The recent enforced retirement from the German Cabinet of Herr Dernburg, the Colonial Secretary, the greatest financier of the Fatherland, but a man of humble birth, revealed anew to the world how unsoftened, even by patriotism and the nation's vital needs, is aristocracy's hatred and fear of democracy.

Any one in touch with the inner history of the French Republic's official life knows how bitter, how humiliating, have been the struggles of the President and his wife to obtain recognition of equality among the men and women ruling in other countries, not through the voice of the people, but by the assumption of "right divine." When the Franco-Russian alliance was formed, President Loubet paid his memorable visit to St. Petersburg as the guest of the Russian nation. He

went alone, because the existence of the President's wife was officially ignored by the Cabinet on the Neva, and the Cabinet on the Seine could not afford to take cognisance of the insult, the treaty being of too much importance. But when the Czar was in Paris soon afterwards, the Czarina accompanying her husband as a matter of course, Madame Loubet took a quiet but positive stand for recognition, the first President's wife to do so, and, in obtaining it, raised the prestige and dignity of the Republic in the eyes of all of Europe.

One night at the opera, the Czarina, entering first the presidential box, seated herself at the front, and carefully spread out her skirts so as to force Madame Loubet into a chair just behind her. But the chair was gently pushed forward, and the dauntless Frenchwoman, the wife of a man of peasant birth, sat side by side with the Empress of All the Russias. There was a moment of agitated silence among the retinue, then the imperial petticoats made way, democracy established its right, and an international victory was won.

The haughty femininity of the Old World, secure in its strongholds, and the final court of appeal in all things of social recognition—how was it to be conquered by the New except by Money, for more splendid homes and entertainments, by gowns of more costly material, and more of them, by the conscious superiority which these bring to the woman—to give her courage to look down her nose at a duchess!

The American invasion of the London West End takes

up, these days, at least a column every season in the society discussions of every respectable newspaper in Europe and the United States; one million dollars is said to be a conservative estimate of the sum paid in house rent by these visiting hostesses. The Duke of Beaufort and the Duke of Abercorn—selecting two names at random—have seldom condescended to receive Americans at their table, but they are nervously anxious each year until an American millionaire has been induced to give a rental for their town houses for the three months of the season which is large enough to pay the expenses of the establishment for the current twelve-months. And Ascot landlords have been numerous who maintained a flat in Paris or a villa on the Riviera from the proceeds of Ascot week—and a rich American tenant.

Foreign correspondents in the United States now punctiliously cable home and European editors gravely comment upon the sailings from New York during the summer season, when a thousand persons spending on an average of a thousand dollars each, start every week for European ports. New York's billionaires are reported as crossing the Atlantic in suites of rooms which cost from five hundred to a thousand dollars for each member of the family; and the luxury of Rome in the days of the later Empire is to be eclipsed in the new mammoth vessels, with complete private flats for passengers, several cafés and restaurants, glass-covered winter gardens, swimming-baths, ball-rooms, and skating-rinks.

American correspondents in Europe, on the other hand, ecstatically record the enormous purchases in Paris of gowns and jewels by American women, thereby giving the custom house officials many a welcome tip, and the purchasers many an unwelcome hour of annoyance and disgust—and keep the wires busy with such important news as details about Henry P. Whitney's shooting-box and the pitch of costliness to which sport in England has attained when an American is willing to lay out over fifty thousand dollars upon his grouse moor for one season alone; of Alfred Vanderbilt's houseboat at Henley, a sumptuous floating palace, unequalled by anything of its kind in Europe; of the train of six or eight motor-cars which the late W. B. Leeds used for himself and his baggage when travelling in Italy; of the velvet curtains which seclude Walter Winan's horses in his stables at Olympia during the London Horse Show.

It is understood that every hostess in Europe is accustomed to the arrival and departure of American guests by special train at the trifling sum of a few hundred dollars for an hour or two's run up from the country or down to the coast to meet a steamer. And one hears that the waiters in the big hotels are not finished in their accomplishments until they can attend with perfect ease to the multifarious demands of the millionaire American youngster. He is usually drawn in a lordly pose, lying in bed—where he has probably been spanked and left by his unsuspicious mother—and employing the interim by ordering everything on the dinner menu from the sleek and solemn servant who,

with his napkin over his arm, stands in an attitude of abject humility before the young Crœsus.

Household servants of all kinds are supposed to be debased and debauched by American money, from the *major domo* in the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg, who skilfully made a tiny nick in every piece of one of the imperial dinner services so that he could surreptitiously sell it to the secretary of the American Embassy —to the page boys attached to King Edward's suite at Marienbad, who sold to silly American women the discarded straws which His Majesty used in drinking his lemonade. And it was, I believe, a set of rich Americans who, several years ago, started the custom in England at the fashionable country-house parties, of leaving behind in tips to the servants the same amount of money as the week-end's accommodation would have cost at the best hotels; and now the old-fashioned dowagers and their penniless daughters who, a few years ago, would have considered an American acquaintance as an "indiscretion," find themselves, to their unspeakable chagrin, omitted from many a country-house list,— to make way for American money.

An evening party at Rome, a decade or two ago, with sandwiches and a good wine to wash them down—now it means a hot supper and such amazing *menus* that aristocratic and poverty-stricken Rome has closed up its ball-rooms in the old *palazzos*, formerly so famous for hospitality, and withdrawn from the scene. "We cannot compete with the Americans"—one hears the same plaintive lament from London to Rome.

Every capital of Europe has its social queens who are poor, and its *parvenu* millionaires who are vain petitioners at their doors; but a large number of these social queens have taken their defeat with the pluck of true sportsmen, have quickly, with wisdom and foresight, accepted the situation—and to-day will sell their *entrée* to any American who wants to buy. They acknowledge that they cannot do without their accustomed rounds of pleasure, of dinners, balls, and hunting. So they get it all and make a good living besides by bringing out their " dear kinsmen " from the States, and surrounding the susceptible young girls with a band of needy noblemen who would consider working for a living a disgrace, but marrying for money their legitimate goal. One must not look too closely at this immaculate masculinity, or their shoes will sometimes be found patched beneath their white gaiters, and under the brave array of spotless high collar and fashionable cuffs with imitation bejewelled links, and carefully brushed coat buttoned closely in, there is, perhaps, an economical absence of linen which an American clerk would despise.

A Spanish princess who, in the United States a few years ago on an official mission, haughtily turned her back upon an " innkeeper's wife "—who is at the present moment one of the great ladies of Europe, by virtue of the judicious spending of her American millions—the princess has, among the many others, so far succumbed to the charms of American gold that to-day, in Paris, any hostess in the colony who knows the proper

channel of approach can get her as the guest of honour —with a little "souvenir" of a gown or two from Paquin or Worth. The hostess is carefully punctilious to send an account of her party to the journalists for publication in Paris, and cabling to New York—unaware of the smiles among the people who are "in the know."

Smug, middle-class people with smug, middle-class notions, and smug aristocracy that has always been rich and knows nothing of the tortures of poverty's privations—are horrified that the boastful American phrase, "Money talks," has been such a siren's voice in nobility's ears. But they cannot understand. It is like the judgment of a plain-faced, anæmic old maid upon the temptations of a superbly beautiful young woman, untutored and unprotected, quivering with vitality and *joie de vivre.*

Ah, the people who understand, how few they are! I often think of a lovely woman, a belle and a toast, who became terribly disfigured through a railway accident, and refused for years to be seen at all by strangers, and by her friends only at night in her own home under candle-light—and who silenced my remonstrances with a stern, bitter outburst, "How can you know that you wouldn't do exactly the same thing yourself if you were I?"

Tout comprendre est tout pardonner.

The obeisance of Old-World lineage before the shrine of New-World wealth is full of pathetic appeal to the sympathetic and psychological mind. But, speaking

with the utmost seriousness and philosophical aloofness, ignoring—or frankly despising on both sides—the *minutiæ* of motive and the *finesse* of manœuvre, it is, nevertheless, true that the American victory has meant an enormous increase in the dignity and accepted importance of the United States. For, it has been among nations who, æons ago, decreed that recognition at court should be the pinnacle of prestige. And it has opened the magic doors to democracy's wealth in Europe, and brought a very universal, although reluctant, admission of the fact that a splendid commercial generalship, which gives sustenance to thousands of workmen and the vitality of prosperity to the whole nation, is equal in greatness to any military generalship ever glorified in a country's history, and fit to mate with it on equal terms.

And even we Americans of lineage and the stiff pride of poverty, who live in Europe as exiles because we feel that we might almost as well be dead as not to be rich in the United States, there has been wrung from us the tardy acceptance that American money, even in its most blatant, brazen vulgarity—and, of course, much of it is neither blatant nor vulgar—but that even when it is, it means the triumph of brawn and brains, of common-sense notions and democracy's opportunities—and that there are many things in the world worse than that —many things, after all, worse even than vulgarity.

XV

LIFE AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CANADA

Turning back the pages to my Canadian days, there come up memories of Ottawa and Quebec, with lofty mountains and boundless rivers, and men of humble birth whose ambitions were as high and as boundless; of vast stretches of ice and snow, swiftly-running sleighs with magnificent furs; and winter dwellings of summer heat, flimsy summer garments, and hot-house flowers; memories of official life which had their own exciting interest; ceremonials baked in the oven of solemnity and pomposity, but served up in the piquant sauce of democratic verve, a delicious mixture of Buckingham Palace and the American backwoods; memories of a society so youthfully unsophisticated that the suave *politesse* of exaggeration, which is the language of European courts, is taken *au pied de la lettre;* and memories of days, all too few, fragrant with the peculiar Canadian charm of life among the *seigniorial* families, exhaling still the atmosphere of dignity and class privilege brought from France during the reign of Louis XVI, and untouched by the disillusions and upheaval of the Revolution. There rise up pictures of enchanting scenery, vistas of sentiment and romance—such as I remember from the flagstaff of Government House in Ottawa, where the Governor-General's ensign floats from dawn till dusk

when he is in residence, and which I saw for the first time one winter afternoon, grasping the staunch old staff and silent with emotion. Over the treetops lay the Ottawa River, marking a line for miles through the plains to the St. Lawrence, crowded then on the late afternoon sunset with countless little sleighs, their tinkling bells coming across the frosty air in faint musical cadence, the Habitants and their wives going home from Ottawa to the little village whose church spire was the landmark on the hill.

But never to be forgotten are the bewitchments of "Our Lady of the Snows," whose fascinations remain unchallenged, the Canadian out-of-door pleasures charged with the sweet wholesomeness of youth's purity and a youthful nation's unmarred soul—not the same of the winter-land of Russia, where *roué* and society courtesan must always probe into the stream of gaiety for the innuendo of carnal things, seeing even the most innocent delights with jaundiced, blasé eyes, and tasting them with carmine-painted lips.

To-day, where is the jaded pleasure-seeker or the *blasé* courtier who would not welcome a season at Government House, "Rideau Hall," as it is called in Ottawa—where, during the weeks of the ceremonies and gaieties of the winter Parliamentary session, there is such a stream of important guests from all parts of the world that a royal prince could not be accommodated for more than a few days' visit, and the household's intimate friends can expect to be stowed away at night in the bathrooms. To beautify Rideau Hall and make it

worthy of its visitors, the Governor-General strips his English ancestral home during his term of office of its finest paintings and engravings, its costliest rugs and hangings and *objets d'art*, its old family silver and splendid china. And he is himself among the pick of ligence and great ambition; a man to whom birth and experience have brought an appreciation of the pomp and circumstance necessary to the ambassadorial rôle, but whose temperament and training have developed *camaraderie*, a rare combination in any European diplomat, but especially rare among the English.

Some years ago, when the new Governor-General included in his household an old friend from London, I set sail with them all, one late autumn day at Liverpool, for the land of snow and sunshine—a voyage which I remember chiefly for the hours of solitude which Lord X, the Viceroy, demanded, striding up and down the deck with a look of abstraction to seaward, his brows knit in meditation, thinking gravely upon his mission—the wooing to monarchial allegiance, not an immature maiden coy, yet eagerly responsive, but a dame become rich and powerful and confident of her charms. In the household there was first the military secretary, a well-known officer, whose duties were much the same as first secretary to an ambassador, who must be able to become *chargé d'affaires* at any time, and who would be likely to be ambassador or viceroy himself some day; and his wife, who would have to assist at all official hospitalities, and be in attendance upon Lady X when she appeared

in public. They had, however, their separate house and establishment, although in the same grounds with Rideau Hall, and with constant communication. There were the three *aides-de-camp*, young army officers, gay and *débonnaire*, who formed the executive management at Government House, the kitchens, stables, gardens, and skating-rink; and included in their triumvirate accomplishments the Scotch economy to produce the scheduled number of receptions, dinners, and balls within the scheduled money appropriation, the Irish "blarney," which is warranted to lubricate the most cumbersome official machinery, and the English *aplomb*, which gives a soldier the courage to look calmly into a cannon's mouth, and a viceroy's A.D.C. the courage to suggest to his superiors in the household who shall and who shall not have the *entrée*, unmoved by a battalion of lovely feminine eyes, indignant, pleading, even weeping. The "triumvirate" had a taste for diplomacy, a smattering of drawing-room French, and a passion for dancing guaranteed not to diminish with a round of the dullest "official" partners, or until 2 A.M. six nights in the week, in the ball-room or upon the ice.

They were boyish enough to feel at first somewhat oppressed with their dignity and the demands which they supposed etiquette made upon them to pay punctilious court to "official" ladies, however unattractive, and to no others, however young and seductive. But an extemely pretty and vivacious Ottawa girl, a belle with former A.D.C.s, although not in the least "of-

ficial," finding herself ignored by the " triumvirate " at a gathering of society soon after their arrival, said to one of them quite openly, " The Governor-General will let you dance with me once if you are really good!" And after that the A.D.C.s allowed themselves sometimes to be as other men and yield to the charms of youth and beauty.

There was also the Governor-General's private secretary, a timorous little man of comparatively humble origin, who regarded his chief with sacred and solemn awe—and who, later on, when we landed at Quebec, turned purple with rage when the western senators slapped His Excellency on the back to demonstrate the force of their welcome. There were governesses for the young children of the two families, the viceroy's and the military secretary's; a tutor for the boy preparing for college; and for the young lady daughter just presented at the English Court there was a chaperon, a cosmopolitan woman thoroughly conversant with official life. And, lastly, there was a supposedly faithful retinue of old English servants, headed by a majestic butler and a *difficile* " lady " cook to whom the A.D.C.s paid assiduous court as one of their important duties, and whom they planned carefully to conceal from the eyes of envious Canadian and American millionaires who might happen to be cookless and not too scrupulous during visits to Rideau Hall.

The pier at Quebec was thronged with Cabinet ministers, senators, and civic dignitaries, impatiently walking up and down, and talking rapid French and Eng-

lish indiscriminately; magnificent big men in physique and in brains. The cannon from the Citadel boomed out with its quick salute the moment the Governor-General stepped on shore, and kept booming away as the Lieutenant-Governor escorted him through an aisle of stalwart, strapping soldiers, the pick of the garrison, to the official carriage and its double team of prancing horses. And Lord X beamed with boyish pleasure at the surging masses of people emptied into the quaint grey streets, cheering and throwing up their hats—as the carriage made its way up to the Citadel, laden high with bouquets presented to Lady X, and passing under a great arch of flowers and autumnal foliage, which is nowhere as beautiful as in Canada.

The Governor-General assumes office the moment he lands, according to Canadian custom, and Lord and Lady X were to stay at the Citadel for a few days—their trunks unpacked—to receive deputations, deliver addresses, and visit institutions, while most of the rest of the household made themselves into a merry little yachting party up the St. Lawrence over to Ottawa and Rideau Hall, to get it in readiness. A week later, as I was passing through Ottawa *en route* to New York, the military secretary's wife and one of the A.D.C.s met me at the station and regaled me with an amusing portrayal of their woes. Rideau Hall is prepared by the government with everything needful in the way of big furniture, but each Governor-General brings the small things of civilisation and etiquette—and these had not arrived. So that when Lord and

Lady X came in from Quebec, dashing up to the house with great *éclat* in the state carriage and four, they had to eat their first dinner in Government House with pewter knives and forks, and one pewter spoon apiece, which the butler handled as if it were poison when he removed it to be washed and brought back with each course. The kitchen range had refused to do its duty, and the cook had threatened to leave on the next steamer—but the A.D.C.s had sworn there was none for a month, and the comptroller had searched the dictionary for phrases of blatant flattery of the lady's carroty locks, ever afterwards described as "Titian gold." Then the military secretary had received intimation that a few dozen among the Ottawa residents wished to pay their respect at once—so the "triumvirate" had manœuvred the loan of cups and saucers and spoons, which had been called for ahead of time by servants from the owners, who mistook the hour and came just as the last callers were accepting their last cup of tea.

Several months later, going up to Ottawa again, for the parliamentary gaieties, I remember the wonderful beauty of the drive in the snapping, exhilarating air, twenty degrees below zero, the trees with every branch and twig encrusted with crystals sparkling like diamonds beneath an enchanting blue sky, like the decorations of a fairy play; and the winter curtain overhung with icicles of the Chaudière Falls tumbling from three different directions into the big cauldron, the foam of the water caught in the ice. Superb bearskin rugs kept

us warm and cosy in the sleigh as we dashed along the white road, over the bridge, up the hill rising on the east bank of the untamed little Rideau River, and through the unpretentious park gates, where there is no sentry to challenge or salute, but where the British coat-of-arms proclaims the official residence—and up to Rideau Hall. It is a modest, unimpressive house of grey stone full of unexpected architectural oddities and peculiar chimneys, as if a dozen different occupants had fashioned it bit by bit—which is exactly its history —and seeming that day to be lying in the lap of the park among the cedar and pine trees, stretching out their thin arms lovely and graceful with soft, feathery masses of snow pillowed against them.

Outside the entrance a city policeman patrolled as sentry, in long overcoat and astrakhan cap, his moustache covered with ice; and indoors the butler and a footman took our wraps, and I had my first look at the little orderly who had been secretly nicknamed "A Quarter-to-three," from the way he pointed out his toes—a brave little sergeant who had seen regular service in India and wore with much simple dignity his uniform of blue trousers and red tunic.

There was a dinner party the night of my arrival, and I recall how punctilious we all were to be in the drawing-room before Lord and Lady X came down, and how carefully we made our curtseys to them, the representatives of Royalty, going then into the dining-room, which was hung in red and, seemingly, for the express purpose of framing the picture of the Italian Cardinal,



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Side view of Government House, Rideau Hall, Ottawa

who was among the guests. His long scarlet robe and big, jewelled ring were striking and picturesque, but not more so than his thin Latin face and deep-set dark eyes, childishly ingenuous and fathomless in the same moment. He had come with the French-Canadian Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, of whom I always think as one of the most elegant and fascinating men in the world, his keen grey eyes kind but penetrating, the famous little grey curls clustering around the tiny bald spot on top of his head, slender in build, and clean shaven, and with a radiant smile which brought out a flash of response in every woman's eye. The flowers were superb, the conservatories having been stripped of their best in honour of the Cardinal; and the A.D.C.s and I exchanged amused smiles at the handsome china marked with the Viceroy's family coat-of-arms, and the fine old silver—we were thinking of that first dinner and the pewter spoons. And brilliant and cosmopolitan as the party was, I would gladly have exchanged it for a sight of the butler carrying out and bringing back those pewter spoons, his nose disdainfully in the air!

The next afternoon at three o'clock there was the state opening of Parliament, and at Rideau Hall we had late luncheon, we women coming down *en décolletée*, according to the etiquette of the ceremonial—and the dazzling sunshine mercilessly exposing its incongruity until some one hurriedly drew down the blinds and turned on the lights. The Governor-General was, of course, the last person to leave the house, as every

one was supposed to be in the Senate Chamber to receive him upon his arrival, even his wife. But we knew the moment of his departure, as it was heralded by the first gun of an artillery salute fired from Nepean Point, which backs upon Parliament Hill, a royal salute of twenty-one guns, as he made his progress up the Hill, in a four-horsed sleigh guided by postilions and surrounded by a glittering escort of helmeted cavalrymen. We ourselves, following in the train of Lady X, drove to the side of Parliament Hill to the house of the Speaker of the Senate, where we laid aside our long cloaks, and then went into the Senate Chamber, already crowded with people, all the women on the lower floor in evening-dress; Lady X, on the arm of the Prime Minister in his official uniform, escorting her up to the throne, and the rest of our party finding seats near it. Standing around the throne were the members of the Cabinet in court costume, the senators, the Chief Justice and judges of the Supreme Court in their official robes, the Apostolic Delegate of the Catholic Church in robes of scarlet and mauve, his chaplain in attendance, near him the Archbishop of Ottawa, in black gown and lawn sleeves, and his bishop's ring *en évidence*, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, and the General Superintendent of the Methodist Church; the Consul-General from Japan, diminutive and impassive, in dark-blue uniform braided with gold; the German Consul-General, in army uniform; the American, in his stereotyped black clothes.

Then, at last, the Governor-General made his *entrée*,

in court uniform, with his cocked hat under his arm, his face seeming to grow in dignity and gravity with each step toward the throne—but this, he told us afterwards, was because his tight collar was about to choke him. Mounted upon the throne, he put the hat on while he read his speech; but every time he said, "Gentlemen of the Senate," off would come the hat—then "Gentlemen of the House of Commons," and off came the hat again; while the House of Commons, standing at the bar, were crowding in like so many schoolboys. He gave it in English, and then in French—with the bobbing and the bowing and the hat off and on all over again. Then came the President of the Senate with his speech in English and in French, with every other word, "His Excellency the Governor-General"—and each time off came the hat of His Excellency the Governor-General. I often wished I had counted the extraordinary number of those hat salutes!

He drove home again in state, with the band playing "God Save the King," the guard of honour saluting, and crowds in the streets cheering—and with the cocked hat off and on every five minutes.

That evening at dinner it was evident from his fatigue that he found it somewhat trying to represent in his person the person of his sovereign, and he quoted Lord Dufferin's definition of a Canadian Governor-General, "who was like the humble functionary we see superintending the working of some complicated mass of chain machinery, merely walking about with a little tin vessel of oil in his hand, putting a drop here and a

drop there to stop the creaking"—in other words, very frequently taking off his hat.

The State Drawing-Room, with several hundred "court" presentations, came soon after, to which Lady X had been looking forward with terror on account of the almost dangerous fatigue to a delicate woman of standing on the throne for three hours to receive and acknowledge the curtseys. But an enterprising florist contrived a tall semi-seat for her, which looked like a pillar of flowers on the throne, but had the top scooped out so that she could easily rest in it without any one knowing the difference, and giving her bows almost automatically—as Queen Victoria used to do when driving through the parks in London, sitting on a cushion furnished with automatic springs, which kept her head in gentle motion all the time.

It was at nine o'clock in the evening in the Senate Chamber, and we had an early dinner at Government House, Lady X beautiful and truly royal in shimmering chiffon and cloth of gold, her three ostrich feathers and veil held in place by a diamond tiara, and a diamond necklace worth a king's ransom clasping her throat—the only woman allowed a court train on account of the multitude of men as well as women to be presented. Lord X was in court dress, with white satin breeches, white silk stockings, and diamond buckles on his shoes, and his breast covered with orders; and, as before, he was the last to leave. But he and his wife met at the Speaker's house in the Parliament Buildings,

and entered the Senate Chamber arm-in-arm, the doors ceremoniously flung open, and Black Rod preceding the procession, walking backward, as if it were the most natural thing in the world to do; the General of the Canadian Army and his military staff of twenty or more handsome officers in gala uniform, and then the Governor-General and Lady X and the official suite, through an aisle lined with soldiers clear up to the throne. From a private entrance, a little door to the right of it, the Viceroy's family and the house guests came first, and were presented, our old friend the military secretary announcing our names with elaborate distinctness and a covert smile. We took up a standing position near the throne, and were soon joined by the senators with their wives and daughters, who entered through the same door; and after them, through a private door at the bottom of the room, came the members of the House of Commons, with their wives and daughters, and the army officers, with the ladies of their families, making their way up with bows and curtseys, and backing out as best they could.

The big entrance doors were guarded by orderlies until the general public could be admitted, which, in this case, was a mob of people extending in a long line outside in the halls, winding in and out through the buildings, crowding and pushing; young ladies groaning over the crushing of their bouquets, and old gentlemen groaning over the crushing of their corns. They had been there for hours, and we saw them pa-

tiently and impatiently waiting when we ourselves arrived. Every man and woman in Ottawa seemed to be there, for a " court " presentation!

When they were finally admitted, we watched them come up to the throne: a long line made up of women sometimes dressed with exquisite taste, and again with the absence of it; great wealth with gorgeous jewels, and modest means with pretentious imitations in paste gems and cotton velvet; the women almost always self-possessed, even when they forgot their curtseys and merely said " How-dye-do " before the throne, but the men almost inevitably looking bored and foolish, and as if they were unwilling victims upon the altar of feminine aspiration. Every one in our party was remarking upon the beautiful bouquets, but the loveliest and largest ones were carried by two well-dressed ladies whose faces were perfectly familiar, but whom none of us could recall—until we saw that they were the wife and daughter of the head gardener at Rideau Hall, and high in the favour of the military secretary. I remember a short, stout lady in tight white satin, who made an extremely deep curtsey, then—horror of horrors—there she stuck, and we all gasped. But she finally managed to get up and away. And another woman of huge dimensions, magnificent in cloth of gold, which rivalled Lady X's, but so violently *décolletée* that some sporting young senators near us put up bets, with the odds five to ten, that the dress would fall off before the evening was over—and afterwards paid the lady such marked attention, in order to watch the bet, that she,

deluded creature, considered herself the belle of the ball.

We had a royal princeling who was doing the "grand tour," and arrived at Rideau Hall in time for one of the state functions—entering the rose-embowered ball-room in the state procession after Lord and Lady X, followed by his three A.D.C.s in the uniform of their home regiments, like the military secretary and the Governor-General's A.D.C.s—members of Parliament and senators in uniforms resplendent in gold braid and gold buttons, making deep bows, and their wives dropping carefully practised curtseys and displaying to the best advantage costumes ordered from Paris and London, and jewels gorgeous enough for any court. The Prince was a charming young fellow of simple manners, who danced in the *quadrille d'honneur* with such delightful deference to Lady Laurier's elderly sprightliness that every "official" woman in the room demanded a dance. He went through it all with beautiful politeness, but I saw him turn many a pathetically envious look upon his A.D.C.s, who were flying from one pretty girl to the other; and about midnight I heard him say to one of them in Italian, "Thank goodness, this show is about over."

Finally the band played "God Save the King," and the ball was closed by the Governor-General and Lady X leaving the crimson-draped throne and the state procession going out—then, fifteen minutes or so later, we of the household trooped back, even Lord X and the Prince, and had three or four delicious waltzes in the

big room to ourselves, and then into the racquet court opposite, which had been turned into the supper-room—where we devoured another supper without the restraints of etiquette, crowding around the Governor-General's big round table in the middle of the room, which earlier in the evening had been sacred to officialdom. Outside the snow lay two feet deep as far as the eye could reach; inside, we threw off protecting scarfs and shoulder draperies on account of the heat, and greedily consumed luscious fruit from South America and California, caviare from Russia, and champagne direct from France, and took away as souvenirs bunches of gorgeous big roses fragrant with summer perfume.

As in every official household during the weeks of the "season," there is at Rideau Hall a regular programme of festivities, with a dinner party nearly every night of the parliamentary session. The most important of these during my visit was a man's dinner of over one hundred, which we women folk did not attend; but we had a peep into the ball-room, where the table was laid with the gold plate belonging to Government House, the big loving-cup in the place of honour in the centre, and the walls of the lofty room, supported by its flat pillars, hung with flags and shields bearing the emblems of the different provinces of the Dominion. There was also the children's fancy dress ball, a regular function to which the Ottawa little people look forward during the whole year—when the most wonderful procession formed a grand march in the racquet court, past the Governor-General and Lady X—"Alice in Wonderland" and

"Alice in the Looking-Glass," with "Mad Hatter," "The White Queen," "The Cheshire Cat," "The Rabbit," and a gay little "Pack of Cards," a troop of "Brownies," "Little Red Riding Hood," and "The Babes in the Woods." There was a merry dance and a host of good things to eat—and, at the end, children who were tired, and tiny ones who were asleep, and dishevelled ones hunting for lost crowns and robes and slippers, but all supremely happy and reluctant to leave.

I remember that I had my initiation into the winter sports at a ski-ing party after lunch a few days following my arrival, one of the "triumvirate" having measured my height to get the length of the skis, and helping me put them on outside the house, then giving me a long pole to which I clung with fierce affection as we all made our way through the park gates and along the road to the steep hill. We began to climb crab-like, and my escort tried to help me—but I told him I preferred to die alone. At the top of the hill some one said "Go!"—and away we went at terrific pace—and, of course, I lost my balance and tripped up the person directly behind me, an extremely conventional English gentleman of middle age, and a brand-new title of nobility—who had to be dug out from where he was buried in the snow, nothing visible but a portly leg and a green golf stocking wildly waving in the air. I thought he would never forgive the indignity, but before the afternoon was over every one else had taken more or less the same pose, which some-

what appeased him. Getting back to the house, we had to be "broomed down" to free our garments from the snow before venturing in. We shed our sweaters, fur-caps, and leggins, and then had tea in the drawing-room, so rapacious after the violent exercise that we swept the cupboard bare. I remember the drawing-room as beautifully furnished and, on gala occasions, stately and imposing, but ordinarily it was comfortable with rose-coloured chintzes over chairs and sofas, a big fire leaping and crackling in the grate, and every afternoon the tea-kettle puffed away and the family gathered unceremoniously around it—although never beginning until Lord X had come in, even if he were late. Lady X adored her handsome, brilliant husband, and delighted to pay him reverence upon any and all occasions—always curtseying to him in public with a deep reverence his valet could hardly have excelled.

We often at night had an "electric show," a pastime peculiar to Canada, some one rubbing his feet on the carpet and then touching your hands, your nose, your cheeks perhaps, and producing an electric spark, so electrical is the Canadian winter air. From the hot-metal fireplace we had many an electrical shock; and, holding a piece of wire in our hands and touching the gas burner, after rubbing our feet on the carpet. It was a favourite "turn," if there were newly-arrived house guests, to take a book with a gilt pattern on its cover, then to plunge the room into darkness, and with a fur glove vigorously rub the book on its inside cover, and watch the gilt pattern display itself in electrical sparks.

We often went for snow-shoe walks, a fascinating pleasure, but almost a necessary means of locomotion sometimes; and we had many a sleigh-ride to places of interest in the neighbourhood—one, which I remember, when we started at eight o'clock in the morning and drove out to see the mysterious cave near the Gatineau Rapids, twenty miles over frozen river and through trackless " bush " in winter garb, and twenty miles home again. Lord X was ardently fond of skating, and we often had a private little skating-party in the afternoon or at night in the skating-rink inside the park, which was flooded for these occasions—and afterwards into the house for something to eat, and generally into the ball-room for an impromptu dance to finish up, the exhilarating air making an almost obsolete word of fatigue. And there were several large parties, but still unofficial, so that the poor Governor-General could skate as much as he liked with ladies who had skill and beauty to recommend them.

Rink House, where the guests were received by the host and hostess in long fur coats, was hung with Chinese lanterns, hundreds of them, and the park was also illuminated, while a huge bonfire blazed up at one end of the grounds, and the ice palace was ablaze with electric light. Besides the big rink, there was the small rink, hidden away in a little island of trees, and nearby a tiny log hut, warm and inviting, where you could get wine and sandwiches—and the fur-clad band, stationed in Rink House, faint and indistinct in the distance—an ideal spot on a moonlight night for a brave man and a

fair maid to plight their troth. The big toboggan slide was lighted with flaming torches on iron stands deeply embedded in the snow, with a climb of at least fifty steps to the top—then flying down like the wind, dark shadows from the fir-trees making mysterious ghost-like forms to frighten you as you plunged past—with every one tumbling off at the bottom, shrieking with laughter and covered with snow. There was generally a skating-march to open these carnivals, the Governor-General leading off with the best woman skater, followed by a long procession, each one carrying a little blazing torch, the skating costumes bright and gay, trimmed with beautiful fur, and the rhythmical, graceful movements in perfect time and poise—beginning in pairs, in fours, in eights, then round and round, and in and out of the maze, ending up in pairs to start once more—to dance Sir Roger de Coverley, to waltz on the ice, cutting roses and double roses, the lily, the shamrock, the thistle, and, as a final accomplishment, to skate the outside edge backwards to the strains of the "Blue Danube." One night a "star" skater, in moccasins and skates, danced the Red River Jig as the Indians were supposed to dance it—but it was nothing more than the Irish Jig!

I recall a memorable fancy dress skating-ball—memorable to me, although there are, I believe, a dozen as brilliant every winter in Canada—when I sat with the Governor-General's wife on the balcony of the big public hall overlooking the rink, where thousands of skaters were gathered for the fête—and saw the ball

opened with a Louis XV quadrille, in powdered wigs, knee-breeches, and Pompadour petticoats. Afterwards the Governor-General and his A.D.C. put on black dominos, and skated recklessly and promiscuously with queens and squaws, Dolly Vardens and ladies *à la Watteau*, and a Cinderella who vanished at midnight, while cavaliers and Chinamen, Indian braves and Spanish grandees, joined in the headlong rush for her slipper.

A few weeks later I was at the Citadel in Quebec, the Canadian Gibraltar, which covers forty acres in a labyrinth of ditch and earthworks, rampart and bastion, and has been the Governor-General's official residence in the province since the destruction of the Château of St. Louis—and I saw there one of the noblest vistas to be found in the world. There are deeply-embrasured windows in the long drawing-room of the official quarters, at one end facing the St. Lawrence, and opening out upon an immense platform big enough for a fancy dress ball or a charity bazaar, and here, from the King's bastion and the flagstaff, the Union Jack floating beside you, and great black cannon from the Citadel frowning down, you see at your feet far beneath the old world and the new, ancient, beautiful Quebec, city of a thousand vicissitudes of fortune lurking behind her palisades, her wharves around the Cape Diamond, and her houses clustering up its heights like Athens about her Acropolis, a panorama which at night takes on the grandeur of mystery as you look down five hundred feet into the dark abyss which flashes out a myriad lights from the city, the mountains, and the river.

In the days that followed, I travelled in the Viceroy's train to many places in Quebec. One morning a party of us, with fifty sleighs, each driving tandem, went out to Montmorency to lunch, then to see the Falls make their furious plunge of 170 feet downward into the earth, with a curtain of frozen spray rising up in front —then to see the toboggan-slide, made out of a huge cone of ice 180 feet high—and then home through the moonlight, joining another party, with hundreds of sleighs and thousands of bells, for a snow-shoe torch-light procession—a weird line of white coats and scarlet caps and flickering flambeaux winding in and out among the trees and the mountain like a trailing, fiery serpent. The Governor-General and Lady X made visits of state to universities and orphan homes, and to cloistered convents where they entered under the privilege given the Viceroy of New France as representing the sacred person of their Catholic king; to insane hospitals, where we were in terror of having things thrown at our heads; to bazaars and exhibitions, where we examined everything punctiliously, and the people examined us. There was always a dais prepared for the Viceroy and Vicereine, a thousand people, more or less, with whom they had to shake hands; addresses to be made and addresses to be received—from obsequious old civic potentates trembling with gout and importance, to white-clad little convent girls whose rose-wreaths quivered upon their timid heads as they dropped their pretty curtseys, spoke their automatic "pieces," and bravely announced with the inevitable bouquet to Lady

X, *Ce sont des roses sans épines que l'on vous offre au Canada.*

In the olden days of New France its governors went out as reluctant exiles from the families of de Bourbon, Condé, Montmorency, and Richelieu, standing on the Grande Place of the Château of St. Louis in Quebec, where Champlain had planted the golden *Fleur de Lis* to flaunt the defiance of the conqueror, and receiving the keys of the fortress and the homage of their sovereign's subjects, attended by bewigged and beplumed courtiers longing to return to the delights of Versailles, surveying with contempt—and noses buried in perfumed *mouchoirs*—the defiant Indians, naked and tattooed. It was the Canada of Voltaire's scorn, the "fifteen thousand acres of snow of which France is well rid," and which Madame de Pompadour turned over to England with a sigh of relief, after Montcalm's disaster, "that at last the King can have a chance to sleep in peace."

But when the English Governor-General and his wife finally said good-bye to Canada, with a tremendous ovation and a deluge of bouquets, it was with tears in their eyes for all the world to see, in leaving the post which is now one of the few *roses sans épines* in the gift of any government.

XVI

WASHINGTON SOCIETY—AN EXPATRIATE'S IMPRESSIONS

It was a good many years after our official life in Europe began before I was able to go to America again, and I remember that when we engaged our passage, I had begged for the slowest boat on the slowest line. I wanted time to think, to adjust my mind. I found myself looking forward to the return with a depth of emotion which surprised even myself. I thought I had conquered my homesickness long ago. My husband was sympathetic, but also amused in his masculine way, and reminded me of a remark we had heard one of my countrywomen make when she accidentally met in Europe two acquaintances from her own city. Greeting them with an excess of cordiality that apparently astonished them, she said, "I am so homesick I could embrace a lamp-post or kiss a dog from home." Quite naturally, they wondered which of them was the lamp-post and which the dog.

As the screws turned in their monotonous round that drew us steadily nearer and nearer to New York, my mind often went back to a memorable conversation I had had as a young girl in Washington with an American ambassador who had served at two of the largest

capitals in Europe, and was acquainted personally with many of the American women living permanently abroad, and the American girls married to important men there. It was the beginning of the era of the American wife of the foreign diplomat, and, as we went down the list, it was already astonishingly long and imposing. I was exulting over what seemed to my vivid girlish imagination would be a veritable invasion in Europe of my country's ideas and political prestige. But the old ambassador put his hand affectionately on my arm—he had known me since my babyhood days—and said, " You are quite mistaken, my child. An American woman married to a Frenchman soon becomes a Frenchwoman, not only before the law, but in fact. And so with the one who marries a German, an Englishman, a Russian, an Italian, even more so than the women of Europe who marry outside their country. How much of it is due to what I was about to call the American woman's fatal gift of assimilation, I cannot say. But it is a subject I have studied long and at first hand."

Then, in his kind, fatherly way, taking infinite pains with a young girl, as often a distinguished old man will do, he went on to say that my opinion was sustained by no less a person than Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor, at that time in the midst of his sway not only in Germany, but throughout Europe.

Bismarck was distrustful of all women, but particularly of Americans. Nothing could have induced him

to send a man with an American wife to Washington. He was fully convinced that if trouble arose between the two countries, she would turn traitor to her husband and his cause.

"The American woman's fatal gift of assimilation," as the old ambassador had expressed it. What marks had it made upon me? I could not know.

But when, late one afternoon, as the sun was setting, spreading its rays softly over the water, dropping gently down, a huge ball of fire, and a multitude of white birds, their wings touched by the glow, were hovering near to give us token of land, I caught the first glimpse of the gleam of light sent out from the torch of the Goddess of Liberty in New York Harbor. To the wanderer long absent, what a sensation, exquisite, incomparable! Memories of long-forgotten days of my childhood, memories of ancestors whose names had before meant nothing to me, leaped into my consciousness, linking me with bonds forged generations ago with my native land.

The great-grandfather who had fought side by side with Washington in the Virginia Assembly, and who gave up his life at Valley Forge, but whose grave I had never troubled to go and see. The grandfather who had gone down with his ship in the War of 1812; my father, who carried a bullet from Shiloh to the day of his death; the uncle who lay on the Chickamauga battlefield, a bridegroom of a month, and the girl-bride who, with eyes that could never weep again, hunted three days and nights for his mutilated body—this America, it was

theirs—bought with their blood. And they welcomed me back.

And my grandmother, who drove her carriage alone with her two babies from the Ohio backwoods, through the wilderness beset with Indians, to her old home in Boston—with the fearless courage and simple trust in God which the women of that day possessed, and welded into the vital breath of the nation's power with suffering and privation—I could never be an alien when she welcomed me back.

I came down to earth with a start as my husband gave me a gentle shake and, with an understanding look, said, smiling, "Yes, it's all very fine and splendid, but don't forget the dog and the lamp-post."

At the wharf we found about forty newspaper reporters who wanted interviews, and particularly the impressions of the young girl I was chaperoning over, the daughter of an old friend, and a countess in her own right. As she was in short skirts and pigtails, and just out of the convent, her impressions, consisting principally of seasickness, did not seem particularly valuable or interesting. But the men followed her to the hotel and succeeded in seeing her when I was out and turning their cameras upon her. They proclaimed her a beauty and an heiress, and she has never been able to live down the reputation, although neither one nor the other in point of fact.

Washington, with its smooth, green lawns and squares, is like a huge park, and its distance from commercial

activities, noise, and dirt makes it unlike any other American city of equal importance, and unlike any capital of Europe. And any foreigner who sees it today would be impressed with the nobility and dignity of its architecture, and the treasures in art which its public buildings and private mansions hold in their interior decorations. In Europe they have preserved all that is old, the hideous old with the beautiful old. Washington architecture is the product of the American art genius of the present day, which is keenly sensitive to the best of the old, but courageous enough, imbued enough with the independence of new-world thought, to reject everything old but the best. "The best that money can buy" has been the motto of a billionaire government and billionaire individuals in Washington.

I think, however, that most Europeans miss the proper setting for these modern palaces. A Venetian *palazzo*, a French *villa*, and an English country house can be found crowding close upon one another, each one perfect in itself, but needing the seclusion of a sweeping park and stone wall or hedge around it. But the proverbial generosity of the American will always make him willing to share even his lawn and front-door steps with the stranger passing by, as he shares all the rooms in his house with the members of his family, eliminating doors, and having only his office downtown, where he can lock himself in and be alone.

And in its life you see in Washington the whole of America, as in no place else in the country, and much more representative than London is of the English, or

Paris of the French. The Republic sends up to Paris its provincial men to sit in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, but they are not in society, which is still controlled by the old families of the monarchy, and you do not come into contact with them in an intimate social way, except the leaders—the Prime Minister and members of his Cabinet. In London, the members of Parliament are not at all representative of the districts they stand for, and often do not live in the county. A man with a London residence may sit in Parliament for a borough he has never seen until the vote-getting days began.

But Washington brings together men from every State in the Union, who embody the life of the place. The congressmen and senators from Maine are products of their district, with the ideas and the twang that go with the men from Maine. And so with Texas, California, and Michigan.

It seems somewhat absurd to consider New York the social centre of American life instead of Washington. In Europe, the King and Queen lead the society of their country, and in America the President and his wife lead it. They do not in France, but conditions there are quite different where the remnant of the monarchy still flaunts the republic. Washington society may never be as elegant as the exclusive circle that is supposed to constitute New York society, but there can be no question about its being more important and representative.

Fastidious Americans will tell you that Washington

is the most vulgar place on earth. But it is not vulgar, it is merely common in the sense that it belongs to the common people who make up the great bulk of the population of the United States, the land of the middle-class, land also of the millionaires of chewing-gum and plug tobacco! If you expect to find perfection of manners among Washingtonians in general, you are disappointed. The wife of one of the most noted of its men used to pick her teeth with a steel hairpin taken from her *coiffure*, in the privacy of the family circle, I have seen her do it dozens of times.

But you are equally disappointed if you expect to find perfection of breeding among the aristocracy of Europe, as any one knows who is acquainted in Germany, or Russia, or among the Latin races. There used to be a *mot* current in London that the one reason the orchestras played so loudly at the big restaurants was that the other guests might not have to hear the Germans eat. And once at an Italian villa I sat for a week opposite at table to a Neapolitan prince who industriously employed his toothpick in his ears every mealtime before using it in his mouth.

And I well remember dining at a celebrated French house where one of the daughters reclined on the sofa after dinner and kicked off her slippers at her brother as the coffee was served.

In making house visits in Europe, one sometimes has to go through a process of fumigation afterwards, and I well recall that once, when discussing with an English nobleman just returned from Russia, the old

saying, "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar," he said, a little coarsely perhaps, "I don't know; when I was visiting in their houses, I was too busy scratching myself."

Americans can point with pride to the fact that theirs is also the land of the millionaires of bathtubs and many famous brands of soap.

I remember that we landed in America on New Year's Eve, and that the next morning we hurried over to Washington, as my husband was anxious to pay his respects to the President at the annual New Year's reception. The train was late, so, instead of going with the diplomatic corps, he took a carriage from the hotel and drove at once to the White House. The negro coachman left him at the steps, and he walked leisurely through to the drawing-room, where the President stood, surrounded by a throng of people. He recognised my husband and, struggling to get forward a little, held out his hand with a smile of welcome. But just then some one pushed brusquely ahead and got the handshake. It was the negro coachman, and, as he turned around, he patted my husband familiarly on the shoulder and said, "Now, boss, your turn next."

This was only one among the many incidents that made a new awakening for me to the new spirit of irreverence for dignity and authority which has grown up in America since the war, and which I had not known there before my marriage, but with which Washington life soon made me painfully familiar. The old

South maintained standards of courtesy which were the outward semblance of the spirit of reverence for place and power. It seems to have been swept away, at least for the present, the good thing with the bad, when the evils of Southern life had to go. Then the tremendous influx of emigration in recent years, which has brought the worst and not the best element of Europe to American shores, has undoubtedly had its influence.

The new spirit seems to be epitomised in Washington official life, the sentiment that in the great republic one man is as good as another under the primary standards of equalisation in the vote and the dollar. As no man can have more than one vote, there is no rivalry for superiority there, it is only the man who has more dollars that is better than you are.

I suppose this new spirit is the license with the liberty, the thorn on the rose of freedom. As a conscientious student of my own country in the life reflected at Washington, and seeing it through eyes grown accustomed to European differences, I used often to speculate as to how much this spirit of irreverence had to do with the personal ambition which sends a man from the labourer's ditch up to a governor's chair or a seat in the United States Senate. In Europe the ditcher seldom looks further than his spade and his shovel, and the man in high place above him, to whom he doffs his cap in deep humility, is a being of another sphere. The man at the bottom has no more aspiration, in general, to sit side by side with the man at the top, than a shellfish has of becoming a whale. Perhaps if the American

ditcher had too much awe and reverence for the governor or the senator and his place, he might never dream of attaining to such heights. But surely a little would never hurt him.

From another point of view, this spirit of present-day Americanism has certainly had much to do with the social success of American girls in European society. The world takes you at your own valuation, after all, and when American women refuse to say "Your Grace" to a duchess, maintaining, "she is no better than I am," she is likely to think the same thing herself and invite them to dinner, while the middle-class person of her own nationality who would expire if she forgot to say "Your Grace," is given three fingers to shake and a condescending nod.

In Europe every one who has had much experience at court realises what the "feeling for royalty" is. You are in touch with it on every hand, and unconsciously a genuinely loyal American may acquire it when intimately associated with people among whom the feeling is inherent through centuries of affiliation with court life. It marks the tone with restraint and deference when speaking of the royal family, the obeisance when approaching them, the formality and dignity when addressing them. And to the ambassadors, judges, and others in high office, one gives instantly the same reverence, as the representatives of the royal house, as well as the representativs of authority.

I remember one evening reception in Europe soon after the allied troops had returned from China, bringing

with them, as everybody knows, many rare treasures stolen from the imperial palaces. The reception was at the home of a member of the diplomatic corps, and a late arrival was the Chinese ambassador, appearing for the first time after the termination of the war. A few moments after he had been welcomed, and as he stood surrounded by a group of distinguished people, who were congratulating him upon the return of peace, an American woman was announced.

The ambassador caught sight of her instantly, and his agitation was painful to see. For she wore the coronation robes of the Empress of China! They had been looted from the palace through the connivance of an army officer, who had openly boasted of the splendid bargain he had made for them.

The woman was actually making her way up to the ambassador when he sank trembling into a chair, and a member of the American embassy staff rushed up and led her in another direction, while the host told a footman in an audible voice to order the lady's carriage. She left the house, and we all thought it the most disgraceful thing we had ever witnessed. But in speaking about it in America, I was astonished to find many people take the woman's part.

The average American is ready at any instant to proclaim from the housetops that he belongs to a country where every man is his own sovereign. The sentiment which would make a Chinaman even of the highest caste refrain from touching the coronation robes of his empress, the representative to him of divinity, and which

would make him prefer death any day to seeing them desecrated, is something incomprehensible to most Americans. If a woman wanted to wear them to a party instead of a Paquin gown—they wouldn't especially admire her taste—but why shouldn't she?

The White House reception in January in honour of the diplomatic corps, is one of the most brilliant gatherings of the season. The conservatories in the presidential mansion furnish gorgeous orchids and other rare flowers, which brought forth exclamations of admiration as we saw them banked high up on the mantels in masterpieces of floral decoration in the Blue Room and the East Room. The gowns of the women made a beautiful display; they would have created comment in any capital of the world, and they were worn with that dash of individuality which one invariably associates with American women and their clothes. Army and navy men in full dress uniform attended in large numbers; it was a pleasure to watch them, straight and tall and graceful as the American officers are, with the keen, free glance of the eyes, the easy, fearless carriage of the shoulders, and the head thrown back to look the world straight in the face, which marks the American man in every walk of life.

I think the members of the diplomatic corps in Washington are much kinder to Americans than the Americans are to one another. If a girl is an ornament to a drawing-room, they do not ask about her grandfather, and they don't care particularly what sort of

manners the mother has. I remember that I was standing one day with an American friend admiring the statue of one of her ancestors which adorns Washington, when she said, with a pardonable touch of *hauteur*, "It's a comfort to me to think I have ancestors who were not butchers, bakers, or candlestick-makers, like most of the people here." "But what is America but the land of the butcher, baker, and candlestick-maker?" I was moved to ask. "Don't they elect the men in office and hold the offices themselves? Are they not the princes of the stockyards, and the railroad kings? Isn't this the one country under the sun that belongs to them?"

When President Roosevelt invited to dinner an immensely rich man who a few years ago was working in a Western mine with a pick in his hand, there was a wave of resentment all over Washington that the President had given social recognition and prestige to a *parvenu*. But the man had won his fortune by energy, character, and financial capacity of a high order, and no one had ever questioned his methods or impeached his integrity. He was a *parvenu*, but, at the same time, he represented the things most essentially American, and was a product of those opportunities which are the glory of the country.

To Washington any one can go, and, with sufficient money to rent a big house and keep a good table, can soon make a place in the society of the city. Old-timers have not yet forgotten the *début* of the family of a rich congressman from the far West, not so many years

gone from Ireland but that the brogue was still in evidence, and how their mansion became known as the "Irish Embassy." And it is not so many years ago that four charming young women, all sisters, but without father, mother, or any social sponsors, took themselves to Washington, built a big house in Massachusetts Avenue, and sent out invitations broadcast to people they did not know. They were bright and gossipy, read a great deal, and somehow managed to secure the lion of the day for their Sunday afternoons. They were naturally very much discussed, but they were also a great success. Members of the diplomatic corps flocked to their house, although it was really astonishing how little was known of their history.

Our diplomatic *confrères* in Washington confided to us that the reason they did not entertain more in Washington, on a large scale, was because any one was at liberty to come. There was a great ball one year at one of the Oriental embassies, and people took advantage of the fact that no English was spoken by the servants to rush to the place. The ambassador saw with dismay the spectacle in the dining-room, and, belonging to the most polite nation in the world, he hit upon an ingenious plan to rid himself of the unwelcome guests. A large quantity of red pepper was secreted in a jar and started burning, and in fifteen minutes five hundred people were sneezing their heads off. Some facetious person said it was an epidemic of influenza descended upon the house, and in five minutes there was a stampede.

In returning to Washington after my long absence,

I realized that the influence of the woman is shown there in society as in no place in European official life, except, perhaps, London. And, in spite of the fascinating and unscrupulous women lobbyists, many of whom have all the gifts of birth and breeding, with the recklessness of forfeited position, and, in spite of the presence in the departments of numerous women whose being there is an open scandal and an insult to the wife of the senator or congressman who appointed them—notwithstanding these grave evils, I would say that the general tone of society was unusually pure. A married man does not have much of a recognised life *en garçon*, as in Europe, or even in New York and Philadelphia. When he goes to entertainments, he is generally seen with his wife in the homely, comfortable way of middle-class people, which may not be especially interesting at all times, but which will always stand for happy homes.

The hostess is as vital a factor in a man's success as his own ability. An unpopular wife can almost ruin a man's career.

In calling upon the congressmen's wives, I had revelations about the women who form no tangible unit in society, who are a part of it as it were, without being in it. They were too poor to entertain or take any sort of a definite position, and I often found them in cheap boarding-houses, living in one or two rooms, with a large family of children, spending their lives in going over to the House looking at their husbands sitting there doing nothing, then going back home perfectly happy.

They were not women of cultivation, because often they had given their youth and strength in helping make their husbands, cooking, washing, ironing, baking, sewing—a servant an unknown quantity in the household. There could be little question that often the men were unworthy of such sacrifices and were machine politicians of the worst type. But I used to think that these loyal women who had worked so hard for their common husbands—common in aspiration as well as in breeding—would be likely to have some really great sons to give to the nation.

Looking at it from our European standpoint, we didn't find that society in Washington was very deep, and in reviewing my memories there is not much that has "stuck." If one is amusing, one is a success for a day. Then some one else appears and takes the centre of the stage. People do not seem to read very much, there is no opera, and few theatres. You belong to a small intimate circle where the same people see one another three or four times a day, perpetually meeting and spending a great deal of time in idle gossip. The diplomatic women seem constantly at battle over some question of precedence.

There are, of course, the big official dinners and receptions where you meet the noted men of the country, but you do not see them elsewhere as you do in European society. It is one of the most difficult things in the world to give a successful ball in Washington, because there are so few available—and presentable—men, except the *attachés* of the embassies and a few stray con-

gressmen. Society, in the dignified and noble interpretation of the word, such as one finds in Europe, is unknown in Washington or elsewhere in America.

The diplomatic corps is received with open arms in Fifth Avenue and Newport, but New York has learned that it must go to Washington for its plunge into official society, instead of expecting Washington to come to it.

Going over to New York for a dinner party one evening, my hostess said, "We are going to give you the most important man in America to take you out. He may be a little absorbed, but it is a great honour to meet him." When he was presented, I saw a wizened little man with beady black eyes and a common face, who hardly gave me a word during the whole evening, and who apparently knew nothing but railroads. They said he owned more thousands of miles of them than any other man on earth, and was worth billions of dollars.

"But have you no longer any American gentlemen who live with their friends and their books, and have a few people in to dinner now and then to talk art and literature and statesmanship?" I asked them, and received a blank look and incredulous smile in reply.

Then I inquired about a friend of my father's who held one of the most important banking positions in New York, and they told me, "Oh, poor old Tom, he isn't in our set any more; you know he has only sixty thousand a year." I hunted him up, and went to dine one night in a big, old-fashioned house which was one of the stately mansions of my girlhood, but which my

fashionable friends considered quite beneath their notice to-day. How glad I was to see it, even in its old ugliness, for its big, heavy, walnut and mahogany furniture was not altogether beautiful, except beautiful to me as representing the old, simple days. We had shad instead of the eternal terrapin calculated at so many dollars a plate, and a good claret instead of champagne. I watched the fine old face, a little stern perhaps, but clean and strong, and with a quiet dignity of repose which was as refreshing as it was inspiring—and delightfully old-fashioned. I had a feeling of having taken a long journey back through the years, and of having been travelling in another world, as I left the house and was whirled away in an automobile to Fifth Avenue again.

Although an American to the innermost fibre of my being, I did not seem to be able to feel at home there when I went back. My friends who were in what they called society—and I am not speaking now merely of Washington—seemed frantically trying to make the debit and credit pages tally in their social ledgers, in giving a dinner wherever they had had one, in paying back a luncheon where they had received one. They would ask me in for what they called "a quiet cup of tea," and I would find a hundred women whose gowns looked fresh from the Rue de la Paix, taking a cup of tea perhaps at the end of an elaborate course of salad, ices, and bon-bons, where God's sunshine was shut out, and the electric light turned on, and where the presence of a man created a sensation.

Society as I have come to know it in Europe, as including all men and women really worth knowing, whether from the point of view of intellectual attainments, or merely beauty, fashion, and charm, I did not find at home. American statesmen and the great financiers are not in it, unless occasionally dragged in in what might be described as a semi-conscious state, the celebrated writers and painters avoid it.

In Europe, if I meet at dinner an interesting man or woman, it follows quite as a matter of course to ask them in for a cup of tea and a chat. It may be a leader of fashionable society, or the most talked-of man in the parliament of his country, but they are quite contented to come for half an hour's talk about things we may have in common, and to accept a cup of tea and a piece of cake. When I was in America, and wanted to see the intimate friends of my girlhood, I felt I had to give an order to a caterer ten days in advance and receive them in my latest gown from Paris.

As we sailed back to the other side of the world, I said good-bye with disillusion and a good deal of relief. And we both eagerly hailed the prospect of living again in Europe, where there still remain some millionaires who are nobodies.

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